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# Who Won the War?

By Edwin James Tippett, Jr.

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1. European war, 1914 — Personal narratives

*Who won the war?*

—The M. P's.

*Who backed them up?*

—The Y. M. C. A.

*Who stole the jam?*

—The Q. M. C.

AB

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# Who Won the War?

## Letters and Notes of an M. P. In Dixie, England France and Flanders

*By*

**EDWIN JAMES TIPPETT, Jr.**

Formerly Corporal, Co. "A," 112th Military Police
37th Division, A. E. F.

With Photographic Illustrations

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# Who Won the War?

## MOBILIZATION

ON the afternoon of July 12, 1917, I received a typewritten slip from Columbus, Ohio, ordering me to report to a Major Robert McPeak, July 14, 1917.

My preparations were virtually completed, for six weeks had elapsed since my enlistment on June 2nd, 1917, and on Saturday morning the 14th, I took train at Toledo for the state capital.

It was raining in the capital city when I arrived. I lunched and took a car for the State Fair Grounds, our Mobilization Camp.

It was mob-ilization which I saw there. Over two thousand civilians, most of them not knowing "Squads right" from "Right dress," on the hands of a few officers, only a few of whom knew much more—even on military subjects. However, the latter wore uniforms, and thus achieved at once distinction in our eyes.

The men were located in the large exhibition-halls—empty of all else but an half-inch accumulation of dust. The Supply Train, Small Arms and Artillery Ammunition Trains, the new Military Police Battalion, a regiment of state artillery, formerly cavalry, and the 4th N. G. Infantry, were all represented.

Every fifteen minutes some busy shavetail or sergeant-aspirant would bustle up, bring a unit to attention, call the roll, discover many missing and many others surplus; then prance off again. To while away the time, the boys began to play a sport known as "the rolling dominoes." This day was the

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first day these men played this fasinating indoor game—as soldiers.

But ample provision had been made for the comfort of those volunteers. They had been ordered to report at 8 A. M. (24 hours before the proper time. The wise ones waited two to five days, and were not punished.) About 4 P. M. they were bountifully fed; each and every man receiving A bun and A wienerwurst. There was water on tap, absolutely gratis. Of course this took the place of both the noon and evening meals.

The officers dined at the down-town hotels.

Then, about dusk, one of the more thoughtful authorities was struck by the idea that the men must have sleeping accommodations. So a truck was sent out with some gray blankets from the Ohio State Penitentiary. Each recruit got a whole one, all to himself; and his full share of the nice, soft-wood floor.

The officers entered autos; to sleep in the down-town hotels.

And I? Learning my first lesson in self-preservation I made a "successful withdrawal" and dined and slept at the home of my good friends," the S —s.

(Letter) Horticultural Bldg., Fair Grounds,
Columbus, O., 16 July, 1917, 9 A. M.

It's a muggy, threatening day. How I wish I could have been home Sunday, canoeing. They are not ready for us. Stood around from 1 to 6:30 Saturday and from 7:30 to 3:30 yesterday with nothing to do, except when we were called together to listen to Colonel S——, who made a stirring speech, asking for men to transfer to the military police—"red-blooded men; men with guts." "The M. P's," he said, "ride to war." Each man would have either a horse or motorcycle. Few volunteered to change over.

Don't know how soon we go South. One story is Saturday. Lieut. E. E. Taylor says a week from today.

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(Postal) Monday, July 16, 5 P. M.

The Quartermaster Corps is no more. We are to be split up. At present I am in a "Casual" Company—a bunch of over-flows and outcasts, unattached. Q. M. C. fellows are pretty sore, but we must take what comes.

---

(Letter) Camp of Mobilization.
17 July, 1917, 6 P. M.

Well, I feel better! Yesterday I was put in with the dirtiest, hardest, toughest crew I ever saw. I was an "assistant chauffeur," or truck loader.

But this afternoon I met a fellow named Renard; a skilled mechanic, who had been assigned to clerical work in Headquarters! He was just as disgusted as I, so we agreed to swap. We saw our respective Lieutenants, who were favorable, then saw Colonel S——, who said it would be O. K. but must wait a day or two. I said I was a typist! I'm going to try to bluff it thru.

---

(Letter) Headquarters Co., Camp Karb, O.,
July 19, 1917.

Here I am in Headquarters Company.

Worked at sorting mail, all of which comes thru our office. We distribute it in little boxes, labelled for the various companies.

Yes, I can get home for the Degrees. I was instructed by Captain Huston, a genial, red-headed young man, how to write an indorsement of my request for leave of absence —a rigamarole with the happy words, "Returned Approved."

It was at noon, July 21st, when several of us left camp and took train to Toledo. A wild, joyous ride it was, some of the fellows climbing on top of the coach while rocking at 50 miles an hour. When we saw the old river again, it seemed as if we had been away years.

A happy evening, then on Sunday, the 22nd, arrayed in a hot wool O. D. uniform, I received,

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with 232 other volunteer Masons, the Scottish Rite degrees leading up to and including the 32nd.

I felt highly honored when I was elected Class Historian, having been nominated by Chaplain MacLane, of the 147th Regiment, 37th Division.

The ritualistic work was magnificently portrayed and its sacred philosophy made an impression on our hearts and minds never to be erased by time.

Never again will all of us be assembled, for ten of our number have been initiated into the final, ineffable mystery, martyrs to their country's cause.

(Letter) Regimental Headquarters Co.,
25 July, 1917, 5:45.

Worked in the P. O. this morning in my undershirt, as it was so hot. From noon to 5 P. M. was on duty as assistant to Y. M. C. A. Secretary, main duty being selling stamps.

Cots and blankets have arrived now, and Colonel S—— says we'll have everything this week.

About this time we got our first of a long series of "shots in the arm"—our anti-typhoid serum and small-pox vaccination. We lined up in a large building, shirts off. A M. C. man rubbed iodine on the arm, then the "Doc" shot what seemed like a quart of liquid in it; or scratched it for vaccination. This sight and the nervous strain of waiting caused several of the stoutest to faint, altho it was not in the least painful. We saw several men with needles sticking in flesh—overlooked by the medics.

(Letter) Headquarters Military Police,
Sixteenth Infantry Division,
30 July, 1917, 10 P. M.

Am now in uniform. Got two pair wool breeches, two shirts, khaki coat, hat, two pair shoes, pair leather and canvas leggins, three sets underwear, slicker and four pair gray wool sox.

There is talk of our going South Thursday.

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The grounds were infested with second-hand clothes dealers, buying civilian outfits from the budding Martians. They were, to state it conservatively, "close buyers." One bearded jew, offering about 50c or a dollar for a nearly new suit, aroused the boys' ire, and they set upon him with their belts, half in fun. A much terrified Israelite fled the scene in a flat-footed gallop dropping shoes, coats, vests and hats at every step.

Work was light and irregular. The wise ones spent little time at camp and much in the city. Baseball, horse-shoe pitching, poker and Nubian discus-hurling were the chief pastimes. Already, as the foregoing letters show, the great army game of spreading rumors had us enthralled.

(Letter) Army Y. M. C. A., 1 Aug., 1917.

My work today was in checking over enlistment papers, searching for errors. While doing this I was ordered to change papers which read like mine, "for three years in the service and three in the reserve" to read "For the period of the emergency." This was done after the men had signed. In business life a man's signature is sacred,—but this is none of my business.

The latest rumor is that we leave Sunday.

---

(Letter) Camp Karb, 2nd Aug., 1917.

We will have to get up at 5:30 from now on. We've been sleeping till 6:15, 6:30 or even 6:45, but today the Colonel came around at 6 and said, "Boys, the reveille sounded at 5:30 and it's 6 now." We got up **pronto.**

(Note: **Pronto** means **toute de suite.** Note 2: We did not again enjoy the luxury of having the Colonel personally wake us up.)

The talk is that we'll go South Monday.

Sold my old shoes today to a Jew for 35c. Think I did well.

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August 2, 1917, I received my warrant as Regimental Sergeant Major, "the highest non-commissioned rank in the army" I wrote home proudly. I was the second incumbent in three weeks. I had been as ignorant of the army as a babe unborn; the vast gulf, for instance between a lieutenant and a lieutenant-colonel; or between the latter Severity and the Majesty of a lieutenant-general, meaning nothing to me. Then, I had not the military temperament—I was not born an autocrat. When I wished something done I'd say "Boys, let's do so-and-so," or "Say, fellows, I wish you'd do such-and-such." This was a manner acquired in six years handling men, and had been successful. But I was later to learn that this man-to-man attitude was not at all favored in our Army of Democracy. The THREE classes: Commissioned Officers (Nobility); Non-Commissioned Officers (Bourgeoise) and Enlisted Men (Proletariat) were to be separated by severe tho artificial boundaries.

So it was under a great handicap that I donned my six stripes. In addition, I was ignorant of military "paper-work" with its bewildering and disgusting formalisms and routine methods of past wars. Our officers were, for the most part, as innocent of knowledge as we, for all their leather leggins.

Our mess at this time was furnished by contract with a native son of Columbus. I have often wondered if a close investigation of the deal might not have been illuminating. The officer who "arranged" it with the contractor, Lt. Col. M——, a wholesale grocer of the same city, was cashiered about a year later, I am reliably informed. He was perhaps the most detestable of any of the officers I knew. His appearance suggested that he had been the original for the old-time cartoons of "A Trust"; and his manners were in charming harmony. I once heard Col. S—— give this typical bully the lie direct, and he

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swallowed it, digesting the insult with his white liver.

For our sustenance the contractor was allowed 75 cents per day per man, which—at 1917 prices—for several thousand men, with free labor and no overhead, should have provided good food and a large profit too. But the food was far from decent. The bulk of it, of course, was bought from M——'s wholesale house! I have seen jars of apple-butter opened, with maggots crawling and writhing on the rim. They were knocked off (or in); and the stuff served and eaten. I have seen worms jazzing merrily thru oat-meal—but it was cooked and dished out. Of course, after it was cooked, they were dead and harmless.

The contractor, I am glad to hear, tried to repeat his system in a California camp, after we had left; and now eats U. S. Prison fare.

The boys from Toledo raised such a commotion about the slop served them that a representative of The Toledo Commerce Club was sent to investigate. (This was before Secretary B— dared apply the Censorship, to protect the officers.) I was present when Col. S—— assured him that the boys were mollycoddles and wanted luxuries; that the food was good and wholesome. (Note to Civilians: The officers have a private mess, where they eat the finest foods, well cooked.) To corroborate this the Colonel turned to me and said:

"Sergeant, tell Mr.—— what you think of the mess."

Well, I was a rookie then, and innocent. So I told the truth; that the food was fair at times but I had seen rotten stuff, wormy food, etc. served out. O Boy! O Man! What a sweet look the Colonel assigned to me!

Twelve days later I discovered "the Colonel was not satisfied." (cf. Page 15.)

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(Letter) August 12.

Sat as clerk yesterday in Summary Court-Martial. Major C—— is Summary Court Officer.

Maj. C—— was then one of the most popular officers, on account of his democratic spirit. His charming wife and six-year-old son visited him one day and he introduced us to them just as if we'd been gentlemen, instead of Enlisted Men.

(Letter) Columbus, Aug. 12, 1917.

There is talk now of leaving Tuesday or Wednesday. * * * Infantry detachments stationed here left this morning for Camp Perry to join Rainbow Division.

---

(Letter) Camp Karb, 14 Aug., 1917.

Had a great time yesterday at the Farewell celebration. Took special street cars to town. Detrained and marched down to Broad and High streets. We massed on Broad street, beside the Capitol, and Governor Cox and Mayor Karb made speeches. Could not hear a sound, much less understand. Some girls and men began to throw packages of cigarettes out the windows of the buildings, causing a lot of scrambling and fun.

Civil War veterans preceded us down Broad street. Then came General Speaks and his staff. Then came Colonel S——, Captain S—— and our Headquarters Company of four men. (We were prominent enough!) In front of Memorial Hall W. R. C. ladies pelted us with flowers.

---

(Letter) August 27th.

Yesterday morning I was ordered to have our Headquarters Company men, who are fellows of good families, and supposed to be clerks, make the officers' beds, hang up their pajamas, clean up their tents, carry firewood for their personal use, etc. How I hated to give these orders! Lowry and Hill were especially obstinate. Feeling they were right, it was hard to insist on their doing this menial, degrading work, but I had to do it.

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It is absolutely forbidden by Army Regulations. An enlisted man cannot be forced to be a "dog-robber." He can do this work if he pleases, for a money consideration, but an officer is supposed never to compel this servile, un-American labor.

But, what difference do Regulations make? If a man protested, the officers would "get him" in a hundred ways. One can't beat the system. I've seen many try. The backbone of it all is that axiom, "Every Officer is Truthfulness Personified; and Every Enlisted Man is, perforce, a Liar." The latter's testimony isn't worth a snap of the fingers against an officer's.

---

(Letter) Co. "A," Mil. Pol.
August 28, 1917.

The blow fell. I am now a Private in Co. A.

Captain S——, when I demanded the reason for my "bust," said I "did not have enough control over the boys." I don't see how he can complain about that. They do the work. He wiggled and squirmed around and just said, "The Colonel wasn't satisfied."

I supposed everything was O. K. until the order was handed me. No use crying; must try to make the best of it. The drilling will be good for me. There will be more fun and companionship in this kind of a company.

---

(Letter) Company "A," M. P.
Aug. 30, 1917.

No drill today. Worked two hours giving away free newspapers at the Fair. Earned $1 for the Company Mess Fund. It was pretty hard to give them away, as many of the rustics thought there was a catch in it somewhere. Tonight we eat a chicken supper, with ice cream, cigars, etc.. which the people of Cincinnati, the home city of this outfit, sent down.

The State Fair forced us to vacate the exhibition halls and we moved to another part of the grounds,

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pitching tents near a pretty artificial lake. The grounds were thronged with people and it was a gala week, for the boys in cotton-khaki were the heroes of all the fair sex.

(Letter) Aug. 30, 1917.

Been reading the Army Regulations. According to them, an officer shall be fined a dollar, and a soldier "a sixth of a dollar" for each profane word he utters. If Uncle Sam wanted to enforce this, it would be a good chance to pay the war debt.

Drill was made longer and more severe daily. A long hike thru the city was a regular part of the routine, then close-order drill and the manual of arms, for we all had Springfields now.

One day the drill-grounds were so crowded with automobiles as to make manouevering impossible, so Captain A—— marched us over to the race-track and into the field in its center. There, while the races were going on, he put us through skirmish drill, which we were just learning. It was thrilling stuff for the ford-owners to see us deploy, advance, drop, rush by squads and "fire," kneeling and prone. The poor race-horses circled the track perfunctorily, for the eyes of all were on us.

September 1st I persuaded the Captain that a furlough home was essential and I arrived there Saturday evening. Sunday was spent as of yore, canoeing on the broad bosom of the mellifluent river. I returned to camp at 8:30 a. m. Monday to find the company had moved from their "big top" tent back to one of the large, open-sided buildings, the fair being over.

(Letter) Sept. 3, 1917—Labor Day.

When I arrived here, the train having been an hour late. the company was lined up ready for drill. I had quite a time

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finding my things, but fell in before too late. Drilled till eleven. Hot and dry. Beans for dinner. At 1:30, fifteen or sixteen of us who had been marked in the morning for the Awkward Squad, went out to drill again, under Sergeant Firsdon, an ex-Marine—and just as modest as most of them. I suppose I was put in because of my involuntary dodging of the head when throwing the gun up to and down from the shoulder. It is unconscious, and a man will do it and yet be positive he never budged. My back is lame tonight.

---

(Letter) Tuesday, Sept. 4, 1917.

Drilled seven long hours today. Then Colonel S—— made us an address in which he said this "child's play" was nearly over and in a day or two we would leave for a place where we would do "men's work"—eight or ten hours' drill a day!

How my shoulder aches now! And how parched my throat is!

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## TRAINING CAMP

SEPTEMBER 5, 1917 was the long-rumored day and at 1 p. m. the Hundred and Twelfth Military Police entrained near camp. There were nine tourist Pullmans in the train. Leaving the Union Station at Columbus at 3 p. m., we sailed into Montgomery, Alabama, at 12:30 p. m., Sept. 6th—remarkably fast time. We travelled comfortably, on this our first railroad movement.

When we detrained and marched over to our camp-site I thought I had never seen so much red dust. And, stirred up by hundreds of feet, it tasted so—so dusty. We sat in the blazing sun two hours, then our tents came and we tried our hand at pitching them. After a long struggle we succeeded and spent our first night in Dixie in heavy slumber.

(Postal) Friday, September 7.

Arrived in camp 3 p. m. yesterday. Awful sun down here. Nights cool. No mosquitoes yet but sand-fleas and gnats by millions. It is awful to try to drill under this sun. Camp not one-quarter done. No lights, sewers, or water-tap. Showers are O. K.

---

(Letter) Camp Sheridan.
Montgomery, Ala., Sept. 7.

This camp is half wilderness and cotton fields yet.

Drilling is too delightful for words, with the sweat pouring in salty cascades off one's nose, the friendly gnats going in one's eyes and ears, and the gun-barrel too hot to touch. We take two or three showers a day, rest when not drilling and so far our health is not suffering.

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(Letter) 37th Div., Camp Sheridan, Ala.
Saturday, Sept. 8, 1917.

We stood Inspection this morning and, as usual, I thought I'd fall over under this beastly sun. Passed O. K. We have Saturdays off from drill—so the opportunity is taken to make us do all sorts of fatigue work. This morning helped carry a good-sized frame building some 200 feet. Am at the Y. M. C. A. now, taking no chances on extra details this afternoon.

Our eats are much worse and scarcer. Fairly clean, but —baked beans two or three times daily with (plain) bread and (bitter) coffee. Enough to sustain life, but not hope. The morale of the men is very swiftly lowering. Almost all are sick and disgusted. I've been dizzy and weak enough to fall down at drill, and have been a little sick; but there's a fiber in my make-up that stands up, and I'll not fall down unless I collapse. We must get accustomed to this climate some time. Then it will not be so bad.

Don't hurry to send me a sweater. I'm the best little O. D. sweater you ever saw. That's no yarn.

Raymond Parker, my successor as Sergeant-Major, is sick of that job. Last night he said he wished he was home —and he meant it. This noon he was dejectedly speculating on how many cigarets he would have to smoke to get a "cigaret-heart," and then a discharge.

---

(Letter) September 14, 1917.

They worked our heads off yesterday morning, and in our "leisure" period after noon mess, had to take a shower and shave. After retreat had to go on guard again. This time I went on from 8 to 9, they said; but they called me at 7:20 and we got back at 9:30. Had a rough post, walking up and down ditches, over stakes, etc.. in the dark.

Again this morning they pretty nearly killed us. Lots of "double time"—many nearly fell out.

Washed clothes this afternoon but will not do it again. I'll pay some fellow to do it hereafter. Have to squat under a shower and scrub on floor.

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Mayer, the boy I wrote about, who went to sleep on post, was interceded for by the Colonel and they did not court-martial him. Got off with confinement to camp for three months. He's lucky.

Like a good school boy, I recited my General Orders today to the Captain, in order to obtain permission to go to town! So circumstances make slaves of us.

Had rifle practice exercises yesterday, which is done by a very interesting method.

---

(Letter) Church Time, Sunday, Sept. 17.

I'm sitting in our tent, alone. The others have gone downtown to church, impelled by the following reasons: First, to avoid being put on a "detail" around camp, and second, to get acquainted with some young ladies.

Shave-tails (brand new, shiny second lieutenants) from Fort Ben Harrison have been attached to each company. They are speeding up our drill cadence from 120 to 130 30-inch steps a minute. Try that on your watch and you'll see we step some. It's the French style. And then "double time!" Those who can't stand it and report slightly sick are put on "light duty" and given "light diet." Their light duty consists in digging ditches and chopping wood. Not very light; but their light diet is light enough to maintain the average.

---

(Letter) September 17, 1917.

One member of our squad is John Eurich, a native of Russia. He has two brothers and a father fighting in the Russian army now. A third brother is imprisoned in Germany. They had a large farm near Odessa, but John was restless and bound to see the world. He sleeps next to me.

---

(Letter) Wednesday, Sept. 19, 1917.

I feel just like a grocer and butcher—I now have Wednesday afternoons off, as well as Saturday and Sunday. These holidays are contingent upon efficiency in drill and good behavior. About thirty of the boys had to drill this

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afternoon in the "awkward squad," but I escaped. Among them were Corporal Hosmer and Sergeant Firsdon, two highly disliked non-coms. They were the two who went to Colonel S—— Sunday and complained about First Sergeant Schuller, Firsdon expecting to get his job. Schuller got reduced to duty sergeant, BUT the top's chevron went to Sgt. Albert Hennegan Parker, a dark horse.

Though we have no bayonets, and are not really combat troops, we have bayonet drill daily now.

---

(Letter) Thursday, Sept. 20, 1917.

Been on Kitchen Police all day. Reported at 5:45, fifteen minutes late, but the first one there. Cleaned up pots, pans. etc., and then dished out coffee at breakfast. Washed dishes in hot sun outside till noon. Served "slum" at noon mess. Worked hard till 2:15; was then off till 4.

While working this morning saw a team of mules run away with a nigger, and, believe me, they ran! We rushed out to head them off but got out of their way quickly. They are crazy brutes. The "shine" fell off and landed on the tongue, where he held on for dear life. They turned by the mess shack and ran some distance, pursued by an auto which never caught them, till a hill tired them out.

Our medical department here has two medicines: If anything is wrong on a man's outside, they apply iodine; if on the inside, they supply salts. A simple pharmacopœia.

---

(Letter) Sunday, Sept. 23rd.

They are trying to force us to go down to the mess hall for "divine services,"—i. e., to hear a Jewish rabbi talk. If I don't go I'll have to work. I won't go. In order to insure attendance, no one is allowed to leave the confines of our battalion camp, tho there is a "Brotherhood" meeting at the Y. M. C. A. I would like to attend. Army life is a reversion to the Dark Ages—a man is allowed no freedom of mind or will, let alone body.

One Hour Later.

Just as I thought—because I refused to hear the rabbi, I

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had to help "police" the camp—pick up bits of paper, cigaret butts, tobacco quids, etc. Oh, it's great!

---

(Letter) September 24, 1917.

This is the life! I am sitting on my cot with my feet on the wet mud, where an hour and a half ago the water was an inch deep. Went to bed at 1:20 a. m., and woke up before 6 to the tune of a terrific rain. It beat down on the tent like a shower does up North, where it only lasts five or ten minutes. Here it rushed down for a couple of hours. Our tent is pitched on an abandoned cross-road, which acted like a river bed. All the water drained here, and, believe me, there was some water. Just poured into our tent in a flood. My cot is on the higher side (I saw to that when we chose our places). The water came up to the middle of my cot. The four boys on the other side were about drowned.

At 5:30 yesterday a carload of us went downtown to the armory, a ramshackle building. Got blue brassards, with a white "M. P." on them; a few got clubs. I was posted about a block off the main street, on the street leading to the station, patrolling a half block. Was busy stopping all soldiers not properly dressed. Tried not to be officious but quiet and friendly and had no trouble, tho I suppose I stopped over a hundred. Took forty-odd names of men wearing leather leggins. Mighty tired of pounding the pave, at 11, when we were relieved. Camp at 12:50; sandwich and coffee; bed at 1:20 a. m.

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(Letter) September 25, 1917.

Last night, as we were riding downtown to guard duty, Captain A—— leaned over and said, "Tomorrow morning get up early and report to the Orderly Room. I want you to help in the work there." The Orderly Room is the Company Office tent,—why so called I do not know, as it is not a room, nor is it always orderly.

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(Letter) September 26, 1917.

Eurich, the fellow next to me, accidentally discharged his newly-issued revolver tonight. He said he didn't know

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how it happened. "I joost fell back on my cot and I didn't know vether I kilt anybody else or not," he said.

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(Letter) September 28, 1917, 7:30 P. M.

I have been sitting in the orderly room since 5:45, wearing hat, rain-coat and sweater, waiting for the storm. Not that it has ceased raining since yesterday morning; or that it is calm; for the water falls in torrents and the tent is flopping like a sail; BUT at 5:45 we got a warning from Divisional Headquarters that the big "storm from the gulf was due here in about an hour. All wires down. It is unusually destructive along the coast and moving inland." I was sent up the line to warn the men in each tent to fasten down everything loose and watch their tent stakes. (The wet spots on the paper are not tears, but drippings from hat-brim.)

This weather is miserable. Bad enough for me—my shoes are always wet and muddy—but the men on guard on the lonely country roads, standing in the mud, with the rain and wind whipping their already soaked clothing, are in tough luck. I'm lucky to be detailed to the office. * * * The storm is coming closer. The rain is roaring down, the wind is tearing at the tent; with occasional pauses which make the contrast stronger. (8:25 p. m.) Lieutenant Grannan was just talking to us. Said he would not be surprised to see the tent go over any—

(Continued 9 A. M., Sat., Sept. 29.)

minute. At the above point a man thrust his head into the tent and cried, "Say, Lieutenant Grannan's tent just blew over!" We went over, picked up tooth-brush, tobacco, shirts, towel, etc., out of the rain and mud. In a few moments I was soaked to the knees, thru leggins, breeches, sox and underwear. The hospital tent and one supply tent also collapsed. Returned to Orderly tent and sat around till 10:30, while the wind whistled, the rain dashed down and the tent tugged at its guys. Then I went to my tent to sleep. The water was dripping down quite freely in places but I spread

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my shelter-half over my blankets and slept dry. That is, I dozed, waking up and holding my breath to see whether the tent would stand. * * *

Well, this tent held but the Orderly tent went down a half hour after I left.

To say this is a dismal morning would be the apogee of optimism. The canteen, a few yards south of the mess shack (where I am writing) looks for all the world like Noah's Ark. Men are there now, wading waist-deep to recover the stocks. But we can stand these discomforts—we expect them. The other boys, on post fifteen or eighteen hours daily on muddy, wind-swept roads, in soaked clothing, are to be pitied. These little hardships, after all, are easier to bear than the mental ones.

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(Letter) Sunday Evening, Sept. 30, 1917.

Heard last night my old friend, Battalion Sergeant-Major Shaw was reduced to sergeant. Bishop got the same dose—only down to private. Thus Shaw, Bishop and Kelley, three of the four Bn. Sgt. Majors at Columbus, as well as two Regimental Sergeant-Majors, were broken. Lister, the other Battalion Sergeant-Major, a young fellow "with a big line of bull," was made Second Lieutenant. The tougher and more drunken you are, the more rapidly you advance. It is a common remark in our company that a man must be drunk to be made a first-class private; go to the guard-house to be made a corporal; or be subject to court-martial to be made a sergeant. What he must do to be commissioned I hesitate to imagine; but it is in relative proportion, I presume. This is not a joke; it is actually the case, time after time, in our company.

No pay yet. Two months are now due us. Tell Dun and Bradstreet I rate the U. S. Government as absolutely good, but darn slow.

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(Letter) Orderly Room, Co. A, M. P., Oct. 1.

Well, this morning I was put on the list of first-class privates. (No, I was not drunk, either). Then a company

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order was issued relieving Corporal Bracken as Company Clerk, and appointing me. Tonight Captain A—— dictated a recommendation to the Colonel to make me a Corporal. Bracken will not be reduced, but will be a duty corporal, which is just what he wants to be.

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(Letter) October 7, 1917.

The paymaster has not come yet. I've been paid $16 in the thirteen weeks I've been working for Uncle Sam. Some boss!

It's a fright the way "A" Co. gets the dirty end here. For instance, Saturday I took our report of traffic duty over to headquarters at 9:55. Capt. S——, Adjutant, demanded the Morning Report, which the First Sergeant compiles personally. Inspection was at 10, and the company was then falling in. But the Adjutant insisted it must be in immediately. Previously we had been getting it in before noon, as per orders. Top Sergeant Parker, when I told him, had me do it for him.

WELL, Captain A—— happened to be in headquarters office when Co. B's report came in—at 1:30 p. m.—and not a word said. You know Supply Officer, Lieutenant Wood, Sergeant-Major Parker, etc., came from "B" Co. Captain S—— lived in Columbus, where "B" Co. was recruited. Captain Van G—— stands higher at headquarters than A——. Van is reputed to have killed several men while on the Columbus police force. Took one of his men the other day who had complained of the mess, pulled him up from his seat and threw him against the wall, dislocating his shoulder. This is as I got the story from another member of "B" Co. Of course the man was verboten to fight back, even if Van had not been so powerful.

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(Letter) October 8, 1917.

A snap-shot of our officers:

Captain A——, 27 years old; heavy-set; wears modish mustache; a college-graduate, who has roughed it a bit; O. N. G. Cavalry Sergeant on Mexican border; excellent drill-master and equestrian; good executive, tho a poor judge of

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men; loves excitement; very successful in the criminal investigation end of our work; maintains good discipline, yet is quite popular with his men.

First Lieutenant Grannan—Thirty-one, slim, snappy, full of life and with a body that has been taken care of; red-headed; trifle liable to lose his head in excitement. Four years in the U. S. Cavalry; 26 months of it in the Philippines as sergeant. Traffic cop in civil life. Real soldier; democratic, yet has fine authority.

Second Lieutenant Rieck—Older, fatter, jollier; gold teeth, bass voice; full of good stories, well told; warm-hearted; well liked and obeyed. Also traffic cop in civil life.

Second Lieutenant (U. S. R.) Knoblaugh—Attached. 23, petit, blonde, smokes only Turkish cigarets, neat, sweet, clean-cut, and sociable. Responsibility of the war heavy on his shoulders. Just hates women. A maniac on a motorcycle.

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(Letter) October, 9, 1917.

Corp. Joe Pyle was in charge of a patrol in a large cemetery last night. This morning I asked him jocularly:

"How did you like the job, Joe?"

"Fine," he responded. "Makes me feel like a general—with thousands of men under me."

Got a long letter from X—— yesterday. He wrote that out of 176 men he was supposed to go to draft camp with, "there was only one with whom he cared to be." I told Captain A—— about it. You would have died at his take off, something like this: "Colonel, I feel that these men are not of—ah—my—ah—social—ah—standing, and I do not care to associate with them. I request—nay, I demand—that I be placed amid more congenial comrades."

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(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Ala., Oct. 11, 1917.

We are laughing today about a little German boy in the company, Private First Class Manweiler. He was on guard downtown, armed only with a night stick. He marched up to the police station with four big, husky soldiers—drunk. He was not proud, but very worried. Said he to the Lieu-

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tenant: "It vasn't my fauldt, sir; I couldn't help idt. Dere was nine of them, but the others got away. I could only get dese four."

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(Letter) Wednesday, October 17, 1917.

Old Captain S—— pitter-pattered in our tent this morning. He had some transfer applications I had made out for some of the boys who wanted to leave us. "These are all wrong—all wrong" he sputtered. "You never address any letter to the 'Commanding General.'"

"Well," said I, meekly, as behooved a volunteer slave. "I thot I had those right. I consulted Major Moss' 'Paper Work.'" Then I picked up the book in question, turned to the place and showed him an example, just exactly as I had written them. He was sure taken aback; looked at the cover of the book suspiciously, at the imprint date (July, 1917), turned it over and searched it up and down several times, then admitted he was wrong!

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(Letter) Orderly Room, Co. A, M. P., Oct. 19.

Comfort at last! Our stove is erected and the wood crackling cheerily.

A very regrettable thing occurred last night. One of our sergeants, on traffic duty, tried to halt a car which had no tail-light burning. It was driven by a lieutenant, with a soldier as passenger. The driver refused to obey and the M. P. sergeant fired either up in the air or at the tires. At any rate, his shot was wild, striking the soldier, who is now at the point of death.

This sad accident has caused ill-feeling. There is talk of the regiment of which the injured man was a member, "ganging" us tonight. Our men have instructions to ignore any insults and avoid trouble, unless actually attacked.

The poor fellow died. The subsequent court-martial of our sergeant is an example of the rottenness of the military system. It also shows how impossible it is for us to make a civilian realize the truth. For there are many things we know; things

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of which we are and were as sure as of the facts that ice is cold and fire hot; but things we could not prove.

The Sergeant was found guilty of disobeying orders "to fire only to save Government property, or (secondarily) his own life." Col. S—— testified he had issued such orders; Captain A——echoed him and it stated that he had had them posted on the Company Bulletin Board. Ex-First Sergeant Schuller swore the order had been received and duly posted.

Unofficially, NOT ONE MAN REMEMBERED SEEING IT; and most of them were positive that it had never been issued. Corp. Bracken, ex-Company Clerk, (not a witness), said he never wrote or saw the order. Later, Sergeant Schuller privately admitted he didn't remember the order at all, but added, "Vot couldt I do? I hadt to swear it."

On such testimony, the accused sergeant was sent to a military prison for five years.

(Letter) Sunday, Oct. 21, 1917.

This is another fine, bright day,—but how different from my Sundays in the old life! To awake in my comfortable bed. about 9 o'clock; to lie comfortably in the shadows, watching the sun pouring in the windows beneath the shades, revealing the familiar old furniture—the dresser, the desk, with the lamp, the vari-colored books in their serried ranks, the old pictures on the wall; to lie there taking my post-slumber rest, then get up, splash in cold water, don a clean, stiff shirt, silk sox, black shoes, white linen collar, a carefully selected tie; then downstairs to a glorious breakfast, on whose details I have not the heart to dwell; to lounge about a bit, then stroll to the old church and murmur mutiny against the length of the sermon; to walk home to a wonderful, old-fashioned dinner; after which an afternoon of reading (and eating, perchance, home-made candy); then a light lunch and off for the evening—

Now, by way of contrast, here is my routine for today: Up at 7, having overslept an hour; out of the blankets on my

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little canvas cot on to a sandy floor; then to start a little fire and put on khaki shirt, wool sox, army brogans, breeches and leggins; up the company street to the bath house, then back to the mess hall to discover I had slept breakfast away. Small loss. Then to work at once, on our report of the "duty performed by Co. A," the day previous. Then five or six more hours of work. For the evening, recreation in writing letters. O tempora! O mores!

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(Letter) October 24, 1917.

I have been making some computations for the mess sergeant. The U. S. A. is surely precise. For instance, tea is figured at $0.4135825 per pound; and prunes at $0.1415825 —to the hundred-thousandths of a cent!

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(Letter) 26 October, 1917.

Did I tell you of another argument with Captain S——? He came in here a day or two ago with some forms in regard to a deserter, which I had sent over unsigned. For the latter he started to bawl me out. But I proved that I was right—they were to be signed by the Colonel, not the Company Commander.

Hill's Service Record, when he was transferred to us from Headquarters Company, had several errors, one particularly bad. Captain S—— had O. K'd and signed it, Here's where I go over to his office—no, I can't reprimand him, but he'll understand, just the same.

---

(Letter) October 31, 1917.

I haven't the energy to write a real letter tonight. But I want to ask you and your mother and whoever else is knitting for the d—d conscripts ("Sons of Liberty") at Chillifeete, Ohio, NOT to send the stuff. You have no idea how we feel about those fellows. Captain A—— calls them "dirty, white-livered, yellow-backed '&'&&'%%"$$"****'*"

The trouble is with the newspapers; they make such a farce of the situation. Their bosh about the boys being

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"really volunteers," "Defenders of America," "SELECTED MEN," "picked soldiers," etc., makes the men who really did volunteer sick at the stomach. All the trips and special holidays are to Chillifeete, and other draft camps; not to U. S. N. G. camps. It is causing quite a bitter feeliing already. Send your splendid gifts to some real patriot—not an Involuntary Hero. I need nothing, but plenty real Americans do.

Here is a poem popular at Sheridan:

ONLY A VOLUNTEER.

Why didn't I wait to be drafted,
And be led to the train by a band;
And put in my claim for exemption—
Oh, WHY didn't I hold up my hand?
Why didn't I wait for the banquet?
Why didn't I wait to be cheered?
For the 'Selected Men' get all the credit,
While I merely volunteered.

And nobody gave me a banquet,
Nobody said a kind word;
The puff of the engine, the grind of the wheels,
Were all the good-byes that I heard.
Then off to the training-camp hustled
To be trained for the next half a year,
And in the shuffle forgotten—
I was only a Volunteer.

And perhaps some day in the future
When my little boy sits on my knee,
And asks what I did in this world war,
And his little eyes looked up at me;
I will have to gaze back in those eyes
Which at me so trustingly peer,
Confessing that I wasn't drafted—
I was only a volunteer.

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(Letter) November 3, 1917.

Thot my troubles were nearly over, but late this afternoon the payroll came back to be done over! Some Incubator Lieutenant at the paymaster's office gave us a certain wording to use. Now, he, or some other darn fool, has

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evolved another (and longer) phrasing, meaning exactly the same thing. The whole job must be re-typed and re-signed by each man. (I'm ready to resign myself!) It is a long, hard job for two men.

This is another good example of the inefficiency prevalent from the top down; for another—we got a Special Order from Division Headquarters for that lot of men we transferred out, listing twenty names. Of the twenty listed, one had been transferred to another outfit a week before, by their Division Order. Another had deserted two weeks before, and we had duly notified them. Since then Division Headquarters has sent us two more orders, transferring two more of this bunch to different units. This is a fair sample. 80% efficiency. And they demand 100% from the ignorant, uneducated Enlisted Man!

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(Letter) November 4, 1917.

Early this evening we heard prolonged cheering for many minutes from another part of the camp. Four rumors were immediately in rapid circulation, viz:

(1) Crown Prince and his army have been captured;
(2) Kaiser has committed suicide;
(3) Division leaves for France in twelve days, and
(4) Great American victory in France.

Here is a thought on the contrast between election night, 1916, and election night, 1917:

## 1916

A great Northern city on an early November night; the bracing cold air giving one new life at every breath. The streets crowded with people; laughing, talking loudly, yelling and cheering, but all deadly earnest and deeply interested in the historic bulletins flashed before them. Few realized the deep import of those results; few looked forward a twelvemonth. Those who did mostly misinterpreted the readings. To us then the election of Wilson meant the triumph of Bryanism, of LaFollettism and of German influence in American politics. So we, or some of us, cheered ourselves hoarse when the blurred returns on the white sheets gave Hughes

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the Presidency. The mighty East had given a veritable flood of votes for the Republican standard-bearer. Hughes was elected!

From one newspaper office to another the streets were almost impassable with the noisy, carnival crowd. Young men formed lock-step-chains and pushed their way thru the mass by main strength. Girls tickled one with feathers; talcum powder and confetti rained thru the air. The city resounded with the deafening tooting of red, white and blue horns. Rattlers vied with them; auto-horns chimed in with a bass; the whole forming a theme that a Strauss might have conceived; a crude, disharmonic blare, yet all toning into one grand, ear-splitting motif—Election Night.

As the midnight hour fell, great bombs were set off from a lofty sky-scraper, their detonations telling the citizens that Hughes was their choice. Only the very earnest stayed longer before the boards, to find, that, in the early morning hours, the tide turned and the people of America had re-affirmed their confidence in Wilson.

The restaurants were filled with excited, somewhat dis-heveled people, talking rapidly and feverishly, while they ate delicate foods and smoked rare havanas. Soon the crowds thinned out and the good folk of the city sought what rest they might before the early newsboy awakened them with dis-cordant voice.

Election Night was over.

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## 1917

A camp in Dixie. Thousands after thousands of tents, all of a pattern, arranged in orderly rows, with a pattern-cut mess-hall at the end of each row. The chill of a southern night in the air. The sky clear and quiet above. A soldier sits in his tent, thinking of the day only one year gone—but what a fateful year to America and her sons! Yes, today is Election Day again, but what a small affair it seems now. There are returns to be heard, but why bestir oneself about it? That flurry and bustle and uproar seem childish now. There is a turmoil ahead so much greater and grander that it seems child's play by comparison. Needs must now have a space of quiet, to ponder over the rapidly-rushing events of the past year, and the unguessable, world-big days to come.

Thirty thousand young men, who stepped forward when world events forced their country to take the sword or allow it to rust with shame in the scabbard, are resting from the day's training. A year ago they were shouting, cheering, toot-ing horns and gaily throwing confetti. Now they are men,

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with more than a man's job ahead of them. Few are interested in the results of the ballots cast today. What interest they feel is rather an academic one. These volunteers, already half-forgotten, except by dear friends and relatives, are beyond that; they have larger interests.

The lonesome notes of a bugle shiver thru the chill southern night; that beautiful, mournful call, which summons them tonight to sleep, but which, a year from tonight, may wail out over their graves in France.

Election Night is over.

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(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Nov. 9, 1917.

While I was downtown last night a near race riot occurred. A negro chauffeur accidentally knocked a white woman down with his car, injuring her slightly. The rumor spread, "a niggah has knocked down a white lady," and trouble brewed. The sporting goods stores were selling ammunition as fast as they could dish it out.

Somehow, the niggers from Ohio got a rumor that a mob was trying to lynch this chauffeur, and they set out on a tear. Stopped one auto and were very abusive. Our M. P's arrested thirty or forty black brutes and let them cool off in the city cooler. Major Fulton, colored, tried to tell Captain A—— that this was all wrong—but the A——s originally came from the South. * * * A—— finally phoned to rest of our boys at camp. Rushed downtown. In fifteen minutes they stopped the sale of ammunition and cleared the streets of all nigger soldiers and made them hot-foot it to camp, out of trouble. I think the M. P's, officers and men, deserve a great deal of credit for the way things were handled.

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(Letter) November 14, 1917.

I asked for permission to go out tonight on a riot call. Lieutenants Grannan and Rieck, three or four men and myself went out in an auto to find the place, but saw no sign of disturbance. The race question is still on a tension. Trouble is likely to break out any minute. But don't I have the doggonedest luck on raids and riots? If I go along, the occasion is as peaceful and happy as a kindergarten Christ-

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mas. If I feel too sleepy to go, there is sure to be excitement.

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(Letter) November 18, 1917.

Well, I went on a raid again last night. Of course it was a failure. Captain A——, Lieutenants Rieck and Knobby, all disguised as enlisted men, Top Sergeant Albert Parker, Cramer, the truck driver, and myself set off about 8 o'clock. Rieck was called "Tubby" and Knobby, "The Kid." Had a nice ride to the river. Crossed on a ferry, which is fastened on a chain. When the ferryman pushed off, the barge pointed up stream, then the current turned it and carried it across at an angle. A typical Southern institution; moves about a mile an hour.

After crossing we sped on as fast as the poor road would permit, the while singing rag-time, college songs, drinking songs, old-time melodies and even grand opera. About five miles beyond the river lay the village of Wetumpka. Stalled around there, trying to avert suspicion, then proceeded casually to a store beyond, where, we had been tipped, moonshine was being sold. Something had gone wrong, for the store was locked. Tried to buy some from a store across the road, but the proprietor claimed to be off the stuff. Returned home disappointed.

Same Day, 4:10 P. M.

I have had my first ride on an army horse and enjoyed it thoroly. Parr and I rode three hours thru the camp and surrounding country. He had a pretty little bay mare and I had a big black brute. I am a little sore, particularly below the knees.

After we returned from our raid last night the Captain got on his motor bike and went gunning after auto bandits. The rest of us, except the Top, went to a nigger barbecue. It was held in a big frame house back some distance from the road. Around in the back one group of niggers were enthralled by the clicking of the ivory cubes. Another bunch were stooped about a soap box (of whose contents they were innocent) playing a game they told us was "Georgia Skin,"

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in which one peeled one card after another off the deck: then every few moments one lucky coon would grab all the money in sight.

Inside the festivities were in full swing. Before a fireplace several coons were eating beef sandwiches. (We were there, let me explain, still searching for booze.) We did not go inside as we have not yet been issued gas-masks. Around to a side room we sauntered, where we had a good view of the ball-room. Some twenty or thirty children of Ham were dancing by the light of oil-soaked rags, thrust in coca-cola bottles. One nigger gal, with a boy's cap stuck on the side of her head, was the mistress of ceremonies, and, believe me, she was a real boss. At one time a big, fat, young negress happened to give an order and the little gal demanded fiercely, 'Wha' fo' you all say dat? Ah'll tell 'em what to do; you-all keep still!"

The crowd was gathered in a circle, and occasionally the mistress would call out: "Circle to de right!" Then they would stop and one young buck would step out and do a little jig. After a bit he would choose a partner, and they would dance a few steps. Then the hostess, if that is what she was, would cry out, "Han's high! Cut it! Do that lovin' Honolulu to de right! Put yo' right han' on yo' lady's back. Throw her! Bring her back! Pledge yo' darling. Take yo' lady home!"

At the last command the pair would take two or three turns then resume their places in the circle. Occasionally, before the last call, she would order "Everybody shimmy!!!"

Did they? Ah'll say they did!

In the midst of the commotion some young nigger put out the feeble lights. Instantly the gang struck up, "If yo' wan' to spread joy."

As we saw no evidence of booze and the air coming out thru the open window, like the atmosphere of a rat's nest, got too strong for us, we finally left.

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(Letter) November 22, 1917.

I was talking to a civilian last night about the negro question. Told me of a case in a small town near here. A

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young white took a shot gun and killed a nigger on the main street, for some real or fancied grievance. He was arrested and brought before a justice of the peace, who fined him $6.75 for "discharging firearms within the village limits!"

Captain A—— was making up a list today of the men to be recommended for the Officers' Training School. He turned to me and asked, "Corporal, are you making application for this?"

I told him no; but I appreciated it.

Had a little run-in with Knobby this morning. He ordered me to give him some papers to which he had no right. I would not do so—even resisted with force. He got quite peeved and finally threatened to "prefer charges against me." Captain A——, who had been busy in the rear of the tent, broke in, demanding of Lieutenant Knoblaugh, in a brusque way, "On what grounds?" After he was told, A—— said that I had been entirely justified. Knobby isn't a bad kid, but naturally these young loots like to spread themselves a bit. I appreciated the way A—— backed me up.

Supply Sergeant Parr and I arrested three soldiers last night, mixing pop and lemon extract[1]—a deadly combination. One was a little nasty, but gave no real trouble.

It was about this time when I was detailed to work on the Government Insurance campaign, selling about a million and a half dollars of protection to the boys of "A" Company. My own policy, which I applied for about December 1, 1917, was delivered to me July 12, 1920. Verily, Uncle Sam may be slow, but he is very sure.

(Letter) December 8, 1917.

Got a Memo Order today from headquarters ordering us to turn in a list of men desiring a furlough from December 21 to 26. Major-General Treat is credited with this. We had a suspicion that Brigadier Smith, who held Treat's job while the latter was in France, was favoring the Montgomery

[1]It was very difficult, by the way, to keep lemon-extract in the kitchen. It disappeared mysteriously.

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business men in refusing furloughs. Our staying here with many thousand visitors coming down, would mean hundreds of thousands of dollars to the local merchants, hotel keepers, and the like.

I was quite surprised at the News-Bug's waking up to the fact that there are soldiers at Camp Sheridan. Some fiat has evidently gone forth that no hint or ghost of preference. even if any existed, for volunteers over drafted men, be breathed; and I have yet to see a newspaper brave enongh to disobey these unwritten orders. Their very words and phrases are the same; all over the country they move their lips like so many ventriloquist's dummies; the same voice behind each mask.

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(Letter) December 9, 1917.

Last night was fearfully cold. Parker and I wore knitted helmets to bed. Our ink, in a covered well, froze one-quarter inch thick.

That pin-headed little accident of nature, placed as politics as Secretary of ———, has overruled our Division Commander, General Treat, on the Christmas furloughs. This poor, little, one-cylinder-brain boob sent Treat a telegram telling him not to "encourage excursions or furloughs." The General wired back for more definite orders and pleaded to be allowed to live up to his promise to his men. The Secretary replied forbidding it.

If this half-Baked little lump of dough HAD a brain he would see the foolishness of his argument—that it would impede the transportation of food and supplies. For instance, I will have three people coming to see me—just three times as inefficient as letting me go to them. Nearly half of the boys will have from one to four visitors, from one day to several weeks. If it does not take more cars to haul two civilian visitors than to carry one furloughed soldier, I will eat my O. D. wool shirt.

At dusk last night the Ninth Battalion left for Overseas. I stood at the side of the road as the black boys swung along, with full equipment. As I saw Old Glory carried proudly by these negroes, and as I stood at salute

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when she passed by, I felt a kinship with them. They are wearing the same uniform and fighting the same fight—AND they volunteered.

Had snow this morning; a sort of sleet-snow which grayed the ground a bit; an unusual sight in Alabama. But before noon it changed to rain, which still falls. This leaky tent, with its open top (the hood removed by medical orders!) is quite unpleasant. As I hug the fire the water drops on me and this sheet.

Had shoes repaired at my own expense as the Q. M. shop hasn't touched them, and one can't go about in "holey soles" in this weather. Also spent $2.50 on making my blouse fit me something closer than an umbrella. (One little thing you don't read on recruiting posters. You find it out later!) As the boys say, "This is the worst war I was ever in."

Am wearing shirt, blouse, sweater and overcoat as I write, but am not warm. It is, as we say, "Colder than Blue Hell." Awful wind and rain storm last night. Woke up feeling drops falling on my face, having permeated this rotten tent; but I just burrowed down and got out of their range.

I was awakened later by hearing several shots. A prisoner had escaped over the double barbed-wire fence at the division stockade. There are two search-lights and also arc-lights all about. He made a break after the Sergeant of the Guard had made his rounds. Sentries in each cupola pulled their triggers. Bullets would not explode. One, Cramer, got so mad and excited that he threw down his gun and cried with rage! Giroux, the other, pulled his revolver, but missed. Rushed out with flash lights, etc., but could not find the fugitive. Men were out all day yesterday on horseback but could not find him.

The fact that the shells were defective ought to remove responsibility from the stockade guard. You know the army has a pleasant and very simple rule on this subject: If a guard allows a prisoner to escape, thru negligence, why he simply serves the rest of that prisoner's unexpired term.

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After the Secretary of —— had dissipated our hopes for a holiday furlough, I still persisted and in the end was lucky enough to get leave "to attend to vitally important business."

I left the Southland Dec. 14th and arrived in Toledo the 16th, missing connections, as always, at Cincinnati. A wonderful week was spent at home, and then I returned to camp, arriving Monday morning, the 24th of December, the train being twenty hours late.

(Letter) December 24, 1917.

The truck driver tells me a friend of his saw an order at Division Headquarters to start moving the Division January 15th.

Another wild rumor current is that we will be mustered out soon and held in reserve till spring, when we go across. This is to make room for draftees. A member of our company claims to have a letter from his brother, who was with the Illinois troops, to the effect that Illinois and Indiana troops have already been mustered out. The story is ridiculous, but generally talked of.

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(Letter) Christmas, 1917.

The bugles are blowing the call to quarters and in fifteen minutes my first army Christmas will be over. What a contrast it has been to our old, pleasant family holiday!

It was a rainy, gray day above; and a puddly, red-muddy day below. After a good dinner, Supply Sergeant Parr, Stable Sergeant Kirkwood and I took a long ride. Wore slickers. Just as we came to a railroad crossing a switch-engine gave out several vicious puffs and my black horse nearly went out from under me, breaking into a wild gallop. After 400 or 500 yards I calmed him down, pulled him to a trot and then a walk.

A sidelight on the medical profession in the army: Captain I—— was sent to the M. P's as

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Medical Officer, replacing Dr. "Snake" Kennedy. My introduction to him was in this wise; I may have forgotten some of the unimportant details, but the essence of the story is unchanged:

Private X, of our company, injured his ankle one afternoon on the drill-field so severely that it was necessary to assist him to his bunk. He could not walk alone. At that time regular daily Sick-Call was at 4 o'clock, I believe. Private Sommers, assistant clerk, filled in the "Sick-Book" that day, entering Private X's name according to regulations. As the injured man could not present himself in person, one of his buddies went over with the sick-book, to request that the Doctor come over to look at the ankle. As often occurred, the Captain himself was not present at Sick-Call; delegated his duties to Sgt. Boneysteele. Bonny promised he'd have the Doctor come over, so the hurt lad waited, in pain. It was 8 or 9 o'clock of the evening when X's buddy entered the Orderly Tent, where I was working, and asked why no one had paid any attention to the suffering boy. I said we would see why not, so we two carried him over to Captain I——'s shack, and saluting, I asked that the man be attended to.

What a tongue-lashing I received! He proposed, the captain said, to instill "a little discipline into this outfit;" he was going to teach them that Sick-Call was Sick-Call and if they did not report then they could wait till the next day.

As I was ignorant of the facts: that X's name had been entered on the Sick Report; that a man had reported in his stead; that I—— had not been there himself; and that it had been arranged for him to call and see the man; I was unable to even attempt to reply. Small good it would have done me if I had.

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(Letter) January 1, 1918.

Heard today a big Alabama railroad men said he had orders to move 400 men a day, commencing January 20th. Most everyone thinks we'll be gone before February 1st.

New Year's Eve I went downtown with Sergeant Huber and out on a case. Then strolled about the streets, full of holiday merrymakers. The sidewalks were jammed. Both civilians and soldiers were recklessly exploding torpedoes and large firecrackers on the walks. It was considered especially funny to shoot off a cracker or throw a torpedo under the heels of a nigger gal, and see her jump. They shot roman candles across the street; bombarded the street cars with the flaming balls; laid skyrockets on the street and lit them.

We did not try to do much—the city police did not try to do a thing—but we arrested some; for instance, to quote our report:

One arrested "for shooting roman candles in people's faces;"

One arrested "for exploding a torpedo under an old lady's dress;"

One for "running around the streets in 1 (one) barrel and 1 (one) pair of shoes."

The last was not even drunk.

I picked up a couple of drunks and had their buddies take them to camp. One had spent $30, one month's pay, for three quarts of booze. Assisted in handling crowds at a fire caused by fireworks. Butted in on a crowd of soldiers about to take a prisoner away from another M. P.

It was not a bad crowd at all, on the whole. Yet I felt ashamed of my people. Here are 25,000 young men, the mobilized forces of the fourth greatest commonwealth of these United States. In a few weeks they will sail on a Twentieth Century Crusade; go forth to fight for a high ideal and a lofty code of international ethics. In a few months many will have given up their lives and many have felt the chill of the Shadow. Hearts at home are aching for them.

In Europe, France, with her back to the wall, is wielding her rapier with ever-failing strength (tho ever-waxing skill);

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while her cities are ruined, her women ravished, her children tortured.

Belgium is a graveyard. England is bled white. Italy is struggling feverishly to avoid being thrust from her foothold on the Alps, and falling headlong to destruction. Russia, mad with blood and crazed with license, is gnawing at her own entrails.

Servia is a sepulchre. Armenia is a place of nameless horrors. All over the world is want, sorrow and suffering. Yet America plays at war.

Last night the torpedoes boomed and the firecrackers banged and the horns tooted and the girls laughed and the soldiers yelled; while confetti and paper-ribbons flew about. Roman candles and sky-rockets and bonfires lit the sky. The noisy, yelling, laughing, crazy mob surged thru the streets, without a care in the world.

It seems to me we need a little more of the spirit of the Christian Knight, who spent from sunset to sunrise with the honored arms he was about to bear, in fasting of body and in vigil; praying that he bear his weapon aright and strike only in a just cause. To me that seems the ideal America should follow. The nation should be on its toes physically but on its knees spiritually. I may be wrong. But this selfish, reckless, Eat-Drink-and-Be-Merry carnivalism jarred unpleasantly last night.

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(Letter) January 9, 1918.

Rode over to the Base Hospital and signed up Pressnell, a man with a paralyzed foot, for $10,000 of insurance. He belonged to the 146th Infantry, was transferred to our company while in the hospital. Deprives us of the services of one more man. More paper-work juggling. Apropos of which: one of the French officers attached to our division said to one of the fellows, "In my countree we train ze men to fight ze bataille; in zis countree, it seems, you train ze men to write on ze papier."

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Friday, January 18th, I left camp on my second furlough to Ohio, this time with the very good reason of "Marriage."

On Tuesday, January the 22nd, at 8 o'clock in the evening, I was married to the dearest, finest, truest woman in the world. After the ceremony we took train to Cleveland, remaining there until Saturday morning, when we left for the Southland. At noon, Monday the 28th, we arrived in Montgomery.

My bride stayed at the Gay-Teague Hotel. I left the camp daily at 5:30 Retreat and we spent the evenings together until I returned to camp for Taps.

Sunday, February 3rd, my wife returned to Toledo to finish her year as Special Teacher in the public schools, according to contract.

(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Alabama,
February 6, 1918.

A strenuous day. Have drilled both morning and afternoon on horseback, sans saddle and sans comfort. Performed usual office routine in addition.

This mounted drill is pretty tough stuff, tho the worst will come later, they say. It is similar to foot drill. Have several exercises to develop the muscles and to get accustomed to the horse. While riding by twos, one man will take the reins for both, the other folding his arms—then we TROT. That's fun—holding on with the knees alone, bouncing along. Two or three falls occur at each drill, but are not serious. So far I have been lucky.

The other day, after all the slow ones, including me, had mounted (and that's a trick, without stirrups), Tubby Thomas was still struggling to climb up the sides of his big brute. We waited some time. At length, with a desperate heave, he got up—only to disappear over the other side, carried by his own momentum. "Vaulting ambition," etc.

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(Letter) February 9, 1918.

Went out riding with Sergeant Parr and Acting Top Lewis this afternoon. I no longer ask Tommy Pigg, acting

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Stable Sergeant, to "pick me out a good horse," as he always gives me the worst brute in the stable. So I asked Parr to select one. I thot he was a friend of mine.

After we had been riding a half-hour or so, and the little beast I was on had shaken and tossed his head, and tried to bolt at every opportunity, until my arms ached, I told Parr what I thot of him. He admitted, then, he had chosen the liveliest horse on the line. I got away with it; on the other hand—poetic justice—Parr was thrown twice. He will not admit it. Says: "That crazy sorrel just a-rared up on his hind legs and I just slid off on the ground."

The other day Lem Gray came riding past the company tents, "with care." Lemyal is a typical good boy from the countryside; a big, overgrown lout, wearing glasses. The irrepressible Sommers yelled at him, "How do you like your horse, Lem?" Lem giggled nervously and said, "By golly, they give me a gol-derned ornery one." Then Sommers dashed out of the tent and threw pebbles, sending the horse some distance up in the air and down the road; and Lem into consternation.

Never saw the equal of this fool, George Sommers. In the absence of the Captain and the "louies" this morning, he, a buck private, accompanied Colonel Crossan on inspection! The Colonel remarked that the cots, set out in the street, didn't look very neat. So Sommers explained: "Well, you see, Colonel, the boys are up late, coming in at all hours, dead tired, and it's very hard for them to fix things up." AND, Crossan said he was right!

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(Letter) February 12, 1918.

Drilled bare-back from 2 to 4. Returned to stables. Sommers, Parr, Lewis, Attached First Sergeant Matthew and Kirkwood were just starting out for the ride. Asked me to accompany them. So I cleaned "M. P." down, gave him a little hay and started. We rode to Wetumpka, about twelve miles north. It was beautiful, in the late afternoon, sunset and twilight hours.

Had a good race on the way. Lewis had a hammer-headed bay mare, a rough-looking animal, but she surely

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can travel, and he was first. Parr's sorrel passed me, too, for I did not urge "M. P." to his utmost. Matthew, fourth, claimed he got a bum start. Sommers and his plug were a mile behind. Kirk, last, claimed he held back his big black mare for fear of her running away.

Ate supper at Wetumpka, tried to find a bootlegger, but no luck. Started back at 9, arriving at the picket line at 11.

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(Letter) February 13, 1918.

On our trip to Wetumpka night before last, we ran our horses, as I wrote; and also fired three or four shots in the air to see how the horses would act. A Company "B" man reported that we had run our horses (contrary to orders); fired pistols; and also that we had refused to pay the ferryman, which last is nothing but a pure lie.

This is more of the ill-natured rivalry between A and B companies—and we're the goats. The Colonel "granted" us a fatherly interview in which he expressed his surprise. but not severe condemnation. I guess he was thinking of days when his youthful blood ran riot on spring nights. So we are merely forbidden to ride to Wetumpka.

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(Letter) Camp Sheridan, February 15, 1918.

Lieutenant Rieck came in at 9:45 last night. Wanted "three good men for a raid." Asked me, so I went, with two others. Took car to negro settlement near railroad. Sneaked thru alleys and streets worse than alleys, across back yards and into a vacant lot, where we lay for three-quarters of an hour watching a shack a block away, where liquor had been sold. Then we slipped up near it, made a rush, each man going to an appointed post. I was between the house and the next. Flashing my light I discovered two M. P's—George Spicer and "Red" Wiethorn. They asserted that they had seen soldiers about the place (as had we) and were looking for them. I made a mental reservation as to the veracity of their story.

Rieck made a thorough search of the joint, tearing the bedclothes out, opening trunks, etc., but could not find any booze.

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(Letter) February 23, 1918.

Wednesday afternoon the papers came thru, discharging Presnell. He's the doughboy who was hurt jumping last fall; was not attended to; and has been in the hospital seventeen weeks, with one leg paralyzed from the knee down. (See letter of January 9th.) I saddled "M. P." and rode to the Base Hospital. Thot I had only to give him his honorable discharge and final statement. Lo and behold! they turned him over to me and took him to our company in an ambulance. He is entitled to an attendant to take him home, as he is quite helpless.

We could not find the proper red tape to tie to obtain transportation for his escort. Late in the evening Captain Tague, Colonel Crossan's adjutant, discovered that the C. O. of the hospital is supposed to write to the Commanding General, who issues an order on the Q. M. So early Friday I trotted (literally) over to the Base Hospital. They said they had no more jurisdiction. Said our regular surgeon should write the letter. I returned and got Boneysteele to do so. They sent it thru the Division Surgeon's office. We are waiting and still holding the poor boy here—it's three days already.

---

(Letter) February 27, 1918.

Had another amusing red-tape episode, in regard to one of our "mule-skinners," Cashen, who is attending a 30-day School for Teamsters at the Remount Depot, 10 or 15 miles distant. We got an order from Division Headquarters ordering us to send his service record to the Remount Depot, that he might be paid there, from a Detachment Pay-roll. I did so. It came right back, with word that we should carry him on our payroll. It was already made without him. I sent it back, quoting my authority, but they returned it again. Then I got mad, saw Captain A——, who got mad; we saw Adjutant Tague, who got mad and called up the Division Adjutant. The latter upheld us. So we sent it back.

The Remount is an organization semi-independent of the Division, and the little Captain over there is very biggety.

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He tried to make our motorcycle orderly take it back to us, but the latter refused; so it is still there.

Isn't that a diverting spectacle for corporals, captains and majors in this great army to stage?

All the boys have the furlough-fever. It has been discovered that a leave requested for the purpose of marriage is seldom refused. It is not uncommon for men to ask for a furlough on these grounds, then to return with a sad story of being jilted. Among those who tried this little scheme was Clyde ("Red") Fox. But. Capt. A—— thot he was not depressed sufficiently by his fiancée's faithlessness, so "Red" has been given the position of Chief Company Woodchopper for one week. Let us hope this will teach him to "hew to the line; let the 'chips' fall where they may."

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(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Montgomery, Ala.,
March 1, 1918.

Busy as blazes this morning. Right after noon mess saddled up and went over to the General Court Martial on O'M——, charged with desertion. (Wish I had space to tell you about this big, handsome, shifty-eyed Irishman and his young wife—but, as Kipling says, that is another story). I wore side-arms, as a witness. Captain Beard, of Toledo, presided as President of the court. According to military etiquette, I did not take off my hat, since I was wearing side-arms. Captain Beard started to swear me in. Four or five of the officers of the court yelled, "Take that hat off!"

I looked around. They yelled the command again. Capt. Beard interposed and told them I wore side-arms. That satisfied some of them, but a few insisted I had to take it off while being sworn.

I started to comply (always being willing to compromise), when the rest of them yelled at me to put it on; and I replaced it. The wear and tear on that poor campaign hat added considerably to the overhead expense of the war.

Captain Beard was laughing openly, but I hardly dared grin, for I was in the presence of my mental, moral and social superiors. Bunch of damphool shavetails. Finally I gave

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Stockade Guards.

C. C. at Rifle Range

Corp. Erwin Co. B. Manweiler and Reese Co. A.

Lt. Rieck in Orderly Room

Lt. W. J. (Pinky) Grannan

Ck. Chaney, Clk. Tippett, Sgt. Connelley, Lard Planitz, Top Lewis, Gen. Sommers and Alla-time Kapazak.

A hard life, buddy; a hard life.

Regular Weekly Inspection. Brooks, Dingey, Fuller, Jim Thomas et al.

Rifle Range. Parr. Childress, Chief Mechanic Fuller et al.

"Our New Top Lewis sleeps all day."

Al H. Parker, 1st. Sgt.

Sgt. Parr, alias W. S. Hart

Our gallant Sergeants in A. E. F. trimmings.

Co. A. 112 M. P. at Upper Wetumpka Ferry on return from Rifle Range.

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my formal testimony as to the correctness of my records in the O'M—— case.

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(Letter) March 2nd.

One of our men, Compton, reported that two niggers shot at him while patrolling the Upper Wetumpka Road last night. He has a bullet-hole thru his hat, but the boys are much inclined to doubt his story, as the hat bears powder-burns, showing the gun was held very near the hat. Still, Corp. Piott claimed, some two weeks ago, that he also was shot at, near the same point.

Pvt. Chester Young, on special duty, raided two moonshiners' stills beyond Wetumpka, in co-operation with the sheriff, last night.

Lt. Rieck went up there to arrest a fellow, but failed to catch him. When the car in which he rode neared the river, on the return, they were forced to stop by a barricade built across the road at a strategical point. Rieck said that if he had gotten the man, there would have been an ambuscade right there, but as the moonshiners' gang, in hiding, saw he had no prisoner, he was allowed to remove the barricade and proceed. Tonight a special bunch of picked sharpshooters went out on the same trail. They are after a desperate bunch, whom the civil authorities have been afraid to touch for a generation. I tried to go, but could not, as I have not had enough experience with a gun.

The new acting First Sergeant, who took Lewis' place when he was discharged, is Harry Brooks, a small, jolly, half-bald fellow; about 30 years old, with three years' N. G. experience. He and I get along famously.

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(Letter) March 3, 1918.

Spring is here. Trees are leafed out, blossoms blown, violets coloring the ground in the woods.

Our Band is to be transferred. We hope that this will mean an end to the small-town peace-time militia foolery of daily guard-mount. Our men have enough to do without this stuff.

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The men who went to Wetumpka last evening never came back till 4 P. M. today. They brought a still and 30 gallons of moonshine, besides what they destroyed. A big haul. Created a furore among the civilians. They had some excitement in the wilds of the backwoods, but no shooting. Arrested five whites and one negro.

---

(Letter) March 5, 1918.

Spent half of morning at Division Headquarters and Division Surgeon's office, trying to get order for attendant for Presnell, the boy with the paralyzed foot. If he had had proper attention the first two or three days he was in the Regimental Hospital he would have been O. K. Now he is nearly helpless. The Division Adjutant refused to allow him an escort and we sent him away alone. It was a crime, but that's the army for you.

Met this lad Presnell on the streets of Toledo in March, 1920. In chatting over old times he told me that he had to stand up most of the way from Montgomery to his home town, near Toledo. Through an error, he had been put on a train which did not stop at his town. The conductor let him off at a bridge a mile beyond, and he had to hobble back, at midnight, along the track.

He had not fully recovered from his injury and neglect two and a half years ago.

(Letter) Co. A, 112th M. P.
March 8th.

Been busy for two days working up an Index of Orders. Do you realize how many varieties of orders we receive? Each must be filed separately. It is really amusing. Here are some:

General orders from War Department; Southern Department; Div. Hq. and Regtl. Hq.; Special orders for each of foregoing; Memorandum orders ditto; Memorandums (not the same) ditto; Company orders; Training Memo orders; Detention Camp orders; Div. Surgeon orders; Inspector Gen-

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eral orders; Div. Q. M. orders; Intelligence Memo orders; Battalion Special, General and Memo orders; Supply Officer's orders; Regtl. Surgeon's orders; also War Department circulars, bulletins; Court-Martial orders, etc., etc.

It seems every little toad, as soon as he gets a bit of authority, starts, as his first official act, "a file of orders."

About this time the following doggerel was posted on the Company Bulletin-Board, with other verses which have been deleted by the Censor:

### THE EPIC OF COMPANY "A"

I'd rather be a bull-dog, in a nigger's back-yard,
Than duty sergeant in the Na-tion-al Guard.

CHORUS:

Oh, tell me how long do I have to wait?
Can I have you now or must I hesitate?

We don't get up for Reveille; we don't stand Retreat;
We have more priv'leges than Gen-er-al Treat.

When they put you on at Post Sixteen
You don't need shoes—you want a submarine.

Ask Corporal Knisely where he got kicked;
Admits he's been hurt—but he hasn't been licked.

When that Mounted Patrol goes forth to ride
I warn all mal-e-factors that they'd better hide!

Have you heard George Sommers bawl 'em out?
They all get worried—but whatinell about?

When the Non-coms try that Monkey Drill
They hunt a soft spot on which to take their spill.

If you come from Y-Bridge, you're pretty darn bright—
And the further you've come, the nearer you'll be right.

Whenever Tubby Thomas on a big horse rides
You're sure to laugh till you split your sides.

As a Sanitary Police, "Cy" cannot be beat;
Remember the creosote he put upon the seat!

Poor Harvey Lucas, Boss of Tent Fourteen,
Cannot get a pass, 'cause his squad wasn't clean.

Everybody shoots the bull, every now and then;
But we all back down for Mule-Skinner Hen.

A H— of a sea cook is Terrence Connelley:
He makes our mulligan of one potato and a pea.

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"All the time Kap-a-zak", "Strong like a bull":
"He'll kill that Scotch Curtis," if he ever gets full.

Kirk was on the border; that is plain to see;
He is still on the border; yes—of In-san-i-ty.

Now, Allover Parr is a pretty lad;
He's H— with the ladies; but there's none to be had.

Our new top sergeant Lewis sleeps all day,
If he aimed at a target he'd be sure to hit—the hay.

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(Postal) March 10th.

Snow? Well, we have had no fires for some weeks; last week when I went to town in the evening I went in shirt-sleeves and was quite comfortable.

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(Letter) Rifle Range, Elmore Co., Ala.,
March 12, 1918.

Got our order to go out here at 8:10 last night. Was busy most of evening fighting fire. Some pines a quarter-mile from Div. Hq. started to burn. Quite a blaze. All troops nearby rushed out. Bed midnight. Awake 4 a. m. Up 4:30. Prepared, ate and hiked out at 6:40. My feet quickly developed blisters, with those new gun-shoe boots—I mean gun-boat shoes. Was far from fresh when we dragged in here. Made the 6½ miles to the river in just 2 hours, including rests of perhaps 20 minutes. Waited there ¾ hour. Ferried over, marched 3½ miles more, and got here just 4 hours after starting; or in about 2½ hours net marching time for 12 miles.

Anyway, I kept up with the rest, who have been working out-doors. Three or four dropped behind. And, "A" Company caught up with, passed and beat a battalion of the 145th Inf., en route, who are in practice for marching. Gen. Zimmerman, commanding that Brigade, caught us at the Ferry and reprimanded Capt. A—— for this stunt. But it was too late.

We had not hiked since Columbus days.

---

(Letter) Rifle Range, March 13th.

As some of the boys say, "this is real soldiering." We sleep in rough barracks, with dirt floors. Have cots and

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three blankets, which we took out. Slept from 7:30 p. m. to 5:30 a. m. We have 5:30 reveille. By 5:45 I am supposed to be dressed; washed; shaved (tho Sgts. Parr, Cort and I have sworn not to shave while here); to have written and figured up the morning report; had it signed and delivered it to the office of a Major of the 145th Infantry, several hundred yards distant!

Read that over and see what they expect in fifteen minutes!

By 6:50 we were marching to the firing-line. There are two hundred targets on the 100, 200, and 300 yard range. I got 118 points of a possible 175, at slow-fire; 105 was necessary to qualify. I was satisfied, considering I had never touched a gun before.

I got 5 hits of 5 at the figure-targets, at 100 yards, but at 200 and 300 my eyes failed me; the targets blended into the background. We shot steadily till 11:40, ate dinner and returned. Shot from 1 to 4:30.

The targets are placed before a pine woods, and you would not believe me if I told you the number of big pines which have been cut thru and felled by high shots. The sharp crack of Springfields is followed by a long clattering echo thru the woods, and occasionally the crash of a falling tree. In rapid fire there is noise enough, for one minute, for a movie battle. There is no smoke, but the dust raised by low shots supplies old-time atmosphere.

Captain A—— was quite tickled with himself on the 200 yard Rapid. He gave orders to Commence Firing; jumped in trench; grabbed a gun; fired 10 rounds, scoring 7 hits; jumped out; gave orders to Cease Firing—all in one minute.

---

(Letter) Range, March 14th.

Another busy, sandy day gone by, and here I sit, as grimy as a coal-wagon admiral, and as mad as a cat thrown in the lake.

I'm gosh-darn disgusted with this whole boy-scout outfit. Reveille, 5:30 (see letter of yesterday); mess, 6; fall in again, 6:45. Work in dirty pits or dusty range till 11:30 or

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11:45. Mess at 12. Fall in, 12:30. Range is a quarter mile from barracks and mess-hall half that. Work till 4:30 or 4:45. Mess, 5. Now an order is issued that from 3 to 6 no one shall use showers but engineers. At 6 it is almost dark. There are 5 showers for 800 or 1,000 men. And NO LIGHTS!

Just got word to appear at Captain's tent at 7 p. m. More work, by the light on one candle, till 9 or 10 o'clock.

---

(Letter) Rifle Range, Elmore Co.,
March 15th.

Well, this is a change; they let us quit at 11 this morning and 4 this afternoon. I was thus enabled to take a bath: which pleased me till I discovered that some miscreant had taken advantage of my worthy passion for cleanliness (next to godliness) by stealing (which is pure orneriness) my issue HAT! I go bare-headed; and pay $1.28 on next pay-roll!

Yesterday morning I was in the pits, the 8-ft. trenches behind the butts, which are the embankments above which the targets rest. The butts are 4 or 5 feet thick, to stop low bullets; and shored with heavy timbers. Timbers also project above pits to protect men. Targets are fastened to frames, permitting raising and lowering. The bullets fly 1 to 5 feet above one's head. We stand with back to riflemen, watching targets. We wave a red flag if target is untouched. If he hits there is a sharp crack as the bullet tears thru target. At 200 or 300 yards this noise is louder, in the pits, than the explosion. When a bullet hits, the pit man pulls target down, pastes a patch of proper color over hole, runs target up, and marks the spot with a white, red, black-and-white or black paddle.

I had charge of ten men, under Lieut. Hascall, newly attached subaltern, who had charge of three sections of ten each.

Monday a bullet struck one of the iron paddles, ricocheted and struck a target-tender in the shoulder. It is not uncommon for a bullet to drop down, but it is seldom anyone is injured.

On rapid fire the targets are raised simultaneously, by

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whistle-signals, held 60 seconds, and lowered by whistle. Quick work, and no mistakes.

Reported to Capt. A——'s shack last night at 6:45. At 7:15 he came and we started to type dope. Desk is 2 feet high, with about 2 x 1½ ft. surface. It is not wide enough for my feet to go under, and too wide to put them outside. Had two candles for light, as I jabbed at that darned Corona between cat-naps. Worked till 10.

Have not shaved for five days, and with a khaki kerchief as my only head-covering, I look something like a Hindoo on active campaign, I suppose.

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(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Ala., St. Patrick's Day.

Here I am back in camp. Started from Range at 1:30 yesterday, after shooting all morning. Return hike was pretty severe, as we made it in 3¾ hours instead of 4, and were held up at Ferry 1¼ hour instead of ¾; therefore it took only 2 to 2¼ hours' net marching time, deducting other stops.

However, no experienced officer would have marched his men so. Regulations call for fifty minutes' marching and ten minutes' rest every hour; whereas, we marched nearly two hours from the ferry with only one four-minute halt.

The following is a true copy of a telegram received by the Company Commander from a Jewish mother:

Cincinnati, Ohio, Mar. 20, 1918.

CAPT. A———, Co. A MILITARY POLICE CAMP SHERIDAN, ALA

UPON ARRIVAL HOME TODAY I HEARD MY SON PRIVATE M——— WAS SERIOUSLY ILL KINDLY ADVISE ME AS TO HIS CONDITION ALSO ADVISE ME IF HE HAS TAKEN OUT GOVERNMENT INSURANCE TO THE LIMIT

(SIGNED)

(Letter) Same Old Camp, March 21, 1918.

Did I tell you of the hold-up three or four nights ago? A Y. M. C. A. man, taking $116 from one YM to another, while crossing a dark place, was sand-bagged and the money stolen. The M. P's got busy at once. This was too

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much for him and he finally confessed he had held up himself, and hadn't been sand-bagged at all. Well, the YM workers can't all be angels; but the institution is nothing less than a god-send to us so far from home.

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(Letter) April 5, 1918.

Did you ever see horsemen ride along, stoop and pick up objects from the ground? "M. P." and I can do this stunt at a trot. The left foot is hooked around the cantle of the saddle, the left hand holding the pommel. . . . . .

Just had a hurry call to Headquarters and was told (in the customary absence of officers and also First Sergeant) that a mounted detachment will participate in a big manouver tomorrow. Have got things going so we can start right after breakfast. . . . .I love this stuff—a hurried call for some stunt to be pulled off quickly.

---

(Letter) April 6, 1918.

I am dog-tired, as I was up till 11:30 last night, up at 5 today, in the saddle by 6:30. We arrived at our post at 8 a. m., then laid around till 10:30. Then the outfits before us moved into "battle" and we were detailed as guards. I had six men, under a "B" Co. Sergeant, to guard ambulances. Sure galloped some when the cars let loose. Great sport.

Sir, I regret to report that the glorious Buckeye Division, the pride of Ohio, was ignominiously defeated and nearly annihilated! So decreed the judges. One brilliant Sears-Roebuck warrior led his men right up in front of a battery of our own artillery! Lt. Col. Bargar, the Division Inspector, rushed up and yelled at him, "Every d— one of you is dead!" Two of our boys who had been assigned to this detachment, being thus slaughtered and of no further service to their country, quietly slipped back to camp, and had an easy afternoon while we sweated and parched. O Death! Where is thy sting?

George Sommers tells that at temporary Division Headquarters, where he was on duty as bomb-catcher, a "bevy"

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of our charming young lieutenants were co-operatively bossing a soldier who was using the field telephone; and in writing out the messages, not one of them could spell the word "deploy." . . . . Cheer up, Hindenburg!

After the sanguinary engagement. I was on duty on the roads, directing traffic as the men marched back to their camps. After cleaning my horse, I had dinner-supper at 3:30.

---

(Letter) The Cradle of the Confederacy.
April 7th, 1918, 10:25 P. M.

At this hour good little corporals should be abed, fast asleep, so they can be ready to play war the next day.

For that is just what the NCO's of various "stripes," the lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels and generals, down here seem to be doing—playing war. But when it comes to real war—in politics—I commend to you the Buckeye Division.

For real Hun-hate of the man who might get your job, or whose job you want to get; for real strategy in putting up barbed (political) wires; exploding a typewritten bomb in his hands, advancing under a heavy barrage from Washington, we can beat any Boche you ever dreamed of at night. . . . . .

I did not go down for the Review yesterday. I hear it was as rotten as the manœuvre Friday. The first went so fast that all the rest had to double-time to catch up. One band actually double-timed past the reviewing stand! Brooks saw one infantryman who just naturally dropped his gun off his shoulder as he marched. Three man had no hats. The Toledo Signal Company passed the stand without giving "Eyes Right."

The more I see this division perform, the more certain am I that the fault is not with the men, but with the officers. Call it treason if you will, but I am more than half-inclined to agree with the contemptuous Prussian sneer that we can not make officers in the

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quantity and at the speed we have commissioned them. We can give them shoulder-bars, but that is not enough.

---

(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Ala.,
April 7, 1919.

Remember my telling you of that mollycoddle Second Lieutenant (Adjutant's Dept.), who really was, in civil life, a drug store clerk? His name is Earle Ketcham, and he's acting adjutant while Capt. Tague is on leave. He reads over the Articles of War, the Army Regulations, etc., etc., which everybody knows, then paraphrases them into Memo Orders, just to keep busy. He has also succeeded in having the Colonel order reveille revived for us.

The M. P. work alone is enough to keep the boys busy. Then they are forced to drill six or seven hours a day; and on top of that get up for reveille, just as do the men who do nothing but drill.

Mad as we all were, I was amused at Captain A——. He said he would "ask for a transfer, if that nonsense were continued." He talked just like the privates do when he works them too hard: their first remark is that they will "ask for a transfer!"

Speaking of Captain Tague reminds me of the classic they tell about him and our vitriolic Chief of Staff, Lt. Col. "Dynamite" Merrill. It seems the Chief had descended to the M. P. Hqrs. and told the Adjutant of some change he wished effected.

Captain Tague was very anxious to please, so he smiled pleasantly, as he responded with alacrity:

"Very well, Colonel; we will act on that suggestion."

"Suggestion, HELL!! Those are ORDERS!!!" exploded D. T. M.

(Letter) April 22, 1918.

Did I write you about the German in our company being arrested? Capt. A—— has been watching him for eight

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or nine months. At last the mouse ventured forth and our big fat pussy-cat grabbed him.

For weeks every letter addressed to him was taken to the Captain, who opened, read and re-sealed them. I saw this.

He sent a box of candy to a sister in Chicago. It was suspected and intercepted. The bottom layer consisted of his papers as a reservist in the German Army. I am not at all sure he is disloyal, but he will be discharged anyway.

Suspicions were first aroused because "Fredt" was so much better a soldier than any of the rest of us! Well, those sheep will be better soldiers than we are till they become individuals, and not goose-stepping machine units.

---

(Letter) Camp Sheridan, April 23, 1918.

Drilled this morning. Mounts carried saddle-bags, rifle, cavalry blanket-roll. Spent most of our time in combat practice. On one command, "Dismount and Fight on Foot," two horses of four are linked together, and one man leads three, while trotting his own, to the rear. This sounds simple. The other three men draw rifles, rush to the firing-line, kneel and snap the triggers.

On the command "Couple Head and Tail," two horses are faced oppositely, their bridles and saddles linked together. This prevents their running away. One man guards all the mounts for the company and the rest go on the firing-line.

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(Letter) Saturday, April 27, 1918.

This cavalry work is fascinating. In the mud-puncher's drill one must simply make a machine of oneself, but in this there is the mount to be directed and controlled. It adds to the interest and takes it out of the cog-and-gear class.

We no longer have the falls we used to have and there is little chance of bruises except when coming up into line at a gallop, when we sometimes jam and a leg may get caught. You know we ride "stirrup to stirrup"—six inches from knee to knee. , , , , ,

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Windy "Hen" Shirer tells me he was over to see Lt. W——, our former Supply Officer, in the Infantry. Hen says the boys there do not like him very well, either. The regiment was on a five-day hike recently, and W—— was riding ahead of his Supply Company, in a heavy rain, with collar up and head down, when a "rubber-block" from a brake flew thru the air, hit him on the head and knocked him from his horse into the mud.

That night, as he was trying to be comfortable in his little pup-tent, someone cut the ropes. He had to call for help, Hen avers, to disentangle himself from canvas and mud. . . . . If anyone but Hen had told me all this, I would believe it. How sweet it would be to know it was true!

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(Letter) April 29.

Officers and men doff O. D. and don khaki May 1st—and how I hate it! Khaki fades immediately into every shade from dead white to yellow, gray, blue, green or brown.

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(Letter) May 2, 1918.

Last night, after writing letters till very late—11:15—I was just making my bed, when I heard a man from "B" Co. call "FIRE!"

I rushed out, saw a great flame in the eastern sky, near the old Alabama State Fair Grounds. I got out my whistle and began to blow and yell alternately, till some of the company woke up. Then I got a Sergeant to take the men over and Sgt. Knisely, Pvt. Drumm and I got the hose-cart out of the shed across the road and started for the Fair Grounds as fast as we could run, others joining us. As we came to the railroad tracks a man ahead of us yelled, "You can't get across before the train!" Somebody yelled, "Who says we can't?" and we rushed the old cart across the rails a hundred yards ahead of a fast train, then on into the Fair Grounds, where the fire was blazing hugely. It was not the Coliseum, as we had feared, but a great shed full of hay and oats. We had the second line in commission.

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The flames rose fifteen or twenty feet in the air, and the sparks falling on some piles of straw, covered with paulins, threatened to cause greater trouble. Men were posted on these piles with buckets, wetting them down. . . . . .

The streams which the hose threw were pitiful—hardly a dozen feet, with no force whatever.

It was comical to watch the various officers running about, some of them highly excited, and none knowing just what to do. One shave-tail took a man's name and reprimanded him for having his shirt unbuttoned at the neck—he had just been holding a fire-line! And yet there were several men there clad only in underwear and a rain-coat!

The fire was confined to the one large building, and as it started to burn down, I went home to bed—about 1 or 2 a. m. Several of our boys worked right thru till breakfast.

They said 150 carloads of forage were destroyed, valued at $50,000.

Among other loudly-advertised stunts was the Psychological Examination. Commanders were supposed to be guided by these tests in picking men. The tests were given most thoroughly, the records carefully compiled—and forgotten. Never once to my knowledge or hearsay in our Division, was a man's record in the "Nut Test" (as the boys called it) ever considered in relation to his future promotion, demotion or transfer. I happened to get the highest percentage of both officers and men in our Battalion. Never did me any good.

Possibly in other Divisions this was more conscientiously consulted.

(Letter) May 3, 1918.

That psychology test was interesting. One question was "How many legs has a Korean?" This was in the test for entrants to Officers' Training School. One of our bright

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Sergeants, who aspires to be a Lieutenant, said, "That was easy; a Korean is a man; an inhabitant of South America."

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(Letter) Somewhere in Alabama,
May 4, 1918.

No, I am neither in the Purity Squad or the Gum-shoer's Platoon. Their favorite disguise is a red hat-cord, to give the idea that they are artillerymen, who are very wicked and trusted by all manner of evil-doers. One of our bright mail-order sleuths combined this artillery-hat-cord disguise with an M. P. arm-band (to save paying car-fare) which was universally admitted a positive stroke of genius, nothing less.

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(Letter) Camp Sheridan, Ala.,
May 5, 1918.

At last, signs are pointing to our sailing overseas. Our boxes are labeled, "112th M. P., American Expeditionary Forces." Well, that is what I enlisted for. As I was just reading in the "Digest':

> It is the men at the front who are now making all Americans, born or unborn, forever their debtors. These are the men who have paid with their bodies for their souls' desires. Let no one pity them, whatever their fate, for they have seen the mighty days and have risen level to the need of the mighty days.

Are not these mighty words, the words of a great prophet and a strong man among his people?

They are the words of Theodore Roosevelt.

. . . . . .

If the Buckeye Division does go across, our new Div. C. O. will get lots of credit for it. Gen. Gaston is a West Pointer, but a rough old bird.

While he was commanding the —th Brigade, they say the Chief of Staff, who holds a mighty job but ranks only as Lieutenant-Colonel, ordered the entire Brigade under arrest, on account of some companies having dirty quarters. Gaston asked him who he was. Col. D. T. told him. "Well," said the General, "I'm the General commanding this Brig-

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ade, Colonel. Now, you get to H— out of here and stay out of here till I send for you."

---

(Letter) Masonic Club, Montgomery, Ala., May 5, 1918.

Orders are still coming which can mean only one thing. Rumors are flying. Everyone is excited.

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(Letter) May 13, 1918.

My military mustache is growing more and more unpopular. The proletariat is growling and I would not be surprised if the mob arose in its violence and tore from my countenance its chiefest adornment. Such was the sad fate of one youth in our company.[2]

May 14th, in answer to my urgent call, my wife arrived in Montgomery to stay near me until we left for France. Accomodations were secured in a pleasant suburb of the little city and the next month was a happy one. The men in camp were in quarantine, but I generally got a pass to town after retreat. If I did not, I went anyway.

Our host and hostess were of that caliber which makes one proud of being an American. We will never forget their kindness and courtesy.

Each day I bore some new rumor of organizations which had left for the camps of embarkation. Busy days these were, too, with a multiplicity of forms to be filled and formalities to be complied with ere leaving for the coast. The infantry left for Camp Lee while the Artillery, Trains, M. P 's, etc., remained in camp to receive replacements before embarking.

June 14th was the great day and at 3 p. m. we marched away from our old camp, which seemed like home, and boarded train for the first leg of our journey to the Front.

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2Note (Oct. 11, 1919) They never did!

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## EMBARKATION CAMP

(Letter) Enroute to Somewhere, thru Georgia.
June 15, 1918.

THIS is the first opportunity I have had to finish this letter started June 13. I found it in my pocket.

We are riding in Civil War model red coaches, far from comfortable, but cannot complain when we think of the boys across the Big Swimming Hole, in "Hommes 40; Chevaux 8" cars. You never saw such a happy bunch as these M. P's. I have somewhat doubted the sincerity of their often-expressed desire to go over, but no more.

Don't worry about me; am well and unworried. This war is getting interesting.

---

(Letter) Enroute thru South Carolina.
June 15, 1918.

I am sitting with my little baby (Corona) on my knees, very much at ease.

In my judgment, Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina are all about the same. Same old pines; same old mules; same old niggers; same red sand. No wonder we licked 'em in the sixties!

Have been pretty busy all morning in my two-seated office and berth, which Wilking, assistant clerk, occupies with me. Last night I slept with two others in a double seat, all crowded up together, but Sergeants Fuller and Dingey waived this location for our official "orderly room."

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(Letter) Somewhere in Pennsylvania,
Sunday, June 16th.

We are crashing across country at Northern speed, nearing Philadelphia. Got into Raleigh, N. C., about 10 last night. More Red Cross canteen workers. Gave us candy, cigarets. Genuine Southerners there—splendid people.

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Just at dawn today we slipped thru historic Richmond. I was surprised at its size and apparent energy. It's too bad Virginia went Rebel; it's too good a state for Dixie. Beautiful, rich-looking country hereabouts.

We arrived at Washington about 9 a. m. Detrained and marched up New York Avenue to the Great Dome. Identified Bureau of Printing and Treasury Building. The Federal buildings are wonderful, but I was not impressed with the balance of the city.

No Red Cross welcome at Washington, thru a mistake on the part of Major C——. The ladies came down while we were parading.

At noon we hit Baltimore, Md., where no sign of canteen workers was seen. We are now passing thru Wilmington, with its maze of ship-yards.

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(Letter)

Co. A, 112th Mil. Police,
37th Division, U. S. N. G.,
American Expeditionary Forces,
226 12th St., corner 3rd Ave.,
Camp Upton, Yaphank,
Long Island, New York, U. S. A.

June 17th, 1918.

I may be rusty on speech-making; but isn't the above a splendid address?

Philadelphia is beautiful. We went by the Zoological Garden, the prettiest public park I ever saw. At the station they gave us ice cream, cigarets and the usual postals.

After going thru Wilmington and Philadelphia we passed thru New Jersey—Elizabeth, Trenton, etc. Then a brief, mentally depressing plunge into the sub-river tube, after which we came up for air on Manhattan, where the Red Cross again awaited us. After their ministrations, we dipped beneath the East River and came up in Brooklyn. It took us from 5 to 11 to come out here on Long Island. We were asleep, but were awakened, made to detrain and march to barracks.

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These draft-birds have surely had it soft, living in these barracks. This one is a big, two-story affair, with iron cots. There is a regular company office (with wall paper), and a private office for the Captain opening off it. Nice bath-houses, etc.

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, N. Y.,
Tuesday, June 18, 1918.

Worked till after midnight, writing passenger-lists, which is very exacting work. After 10 o'clock I was so sleepy that I would fall asleep after every line I dictated to Al Shirer, who was typing.

I have a higher respect for our division than before. This big camp is not administered with the thoroughness or strictness that Sheridan was. We see women leaving camp early every morning. The place doesn't look clean.

We get the real army style here: at Reveille we see a big red flash, hear a roar, watch a little cloud of smoke arise, and Old Glory mounts in the air. This is reversed at Retreat.

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, L. I., N. Y.,
June 19, 1918.

Well, barracks-life seems the only natural and normal mode of existence now. I have lived thus three days and already the orderly tent at Sheridan is forgotten.

The boys got hold of an old grand piano and have been making the rafters rattle.

You bet they are shapely! I refer to my nether limbs, wrapped in O. D. cloth spiral puttees.

Went to a show last night. The Liberty Theatre, as everything else for the draft-men, is much finer than we had. * * * But don't let anyone tell you that the N. G. men are not top-notch, or the Ohio N. G., anyway. The superiority of our men—yes, even our officers—in intelligence, military bearing, snap, etc., over these stationed here, would be apparent to anyone.

Have another pair of those lovely field shoes. Now

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when we see a palpable slacker we greet him with the exhortation: "Get him, Hob-Nails!"

Our train got splendid greetings on our way here. Especially northward of Baltimore every house we passed turned out men, women and children to greet us. It was typically American; not violent, crazy excitement, but friendly hand wavings, genuine smiles and childish salutes. Every station had its Red Cross, with their little luxuries and pleasant greetings. The East knows there is a war.

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, L. I., June 19.

An "advance man" for the One Hundred and Twelfth Trains was just in. Said he did not have to ask where the various 37th Division units were quartered — he simply looked at the areas and observed the general condition of the barracks—our outfits are so much neater and snappier.

I was just interrupted by a commotion. It turned out to have been caused by a negro hanging about our barracks. One of our boys ordered him out; he had no business there. In addition to that, he was suffering from a disgusting disease. He refused to go. He was hit and shoved out. Several other niggers came up and were inclined to argue. The original Ham tried to draw a knife and Burge, who first started on him proceeded to finish him, while the rest of the boys kept the other blacks out. Some of our hot-headed fellows were up on the second floor, loading rifles; niggers were pouring across the street; while the Ammunition Train boys were near, ready to interfere in our behalf, if necessary, when our officers got on the job and quelled the incipient riot. It looked mighty serious for a while. It is peculiar how nine months in Alabama changes one's ideas of this race subject. The coons are feeling mighty biggety since donning the uniform. It will mean trouble after the war.

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, June 23, 1918.

Ten thousand new draftees are beginning to arrive. They stay here a few days, then go to southern training camps. They marched in today, with personal articles dumped in

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blankets, pasteboard-boxes, suit cases, etc. Several women accompanied them; many fathers, even, chaperoning their dear little boys! And they had been in service some days at least, for they had uniforms. If that's soldiering, I'm a veteran campaigner!

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, June 23.

I was lucky enough to get a pass to see the big city. At the R. R. depot there is a Camp M. P. Lieutenant, doing the work which a private of our outfit did at Montgomery! He made "all enlisted men stand back" while civilians, including niggers, passed thru, taking the best seats. It made my blood boil, but, of course, I hardly dared look what I felt. He displayed a remarkable respect for the uniform, did he not?

After a lunch at Child's, we walked up Seventh and, after looking about a bit, went to the New Amsterdam and saw the Follies. After this we walked about the streets, stopping once for some chop suey. We then tried to get a room. At four hotels we were told there were no rooms vacant. We knew the clerks were lying, but, as we were sober and quiet, we could not see why they would not wish to take a soldier in. Of course we were not "gentlemen;" if we had been we would have been commissioned officers, and not enlisted men. It made us respect New York as highly as it made us proud of our uniform, and glad we had volunteered.

Finally landed in a second-rater, The Navarre, about Thirty-ninth and Seventh avenue, where Sergeant Knisely and I occupied a small room, with one bed, together.

Next morning, after walking about a bit, took the bus up Fifth avenue. The sun was shining and the Hudson was glorious. Several men-of-war were anchored among the crowded shipping. After calling on friends, we took a surface car way back from Columbia University to the Battery. Traffic something unimaginable. Took boat to Coney Island; a very interesting trip. Saw a fleet of Danish merchantmen: all marked with the red flag with the bisecting cross of white; and "DANMARK" painted in huge letters on their sides. * * *

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Went to the camp theater last night. In the news films they showed young men registering for the draft. A few of the draftees present clapped. Then the Buckeye Division boys awoke and hissed. I do not approve of hissing, as a rule, but this warmed my heart. We let out lots of accumulated bitterness.

If the country does not appreciate her volunteers, it is some small satisfaction, at least, to let the world know how we despise the slackers. The old bitter feeling was revived and intensified when we saw the superior accommodations and the luxuries provided for these S(ons of) S(afety).

Then came the Mercedes act, where a blind-folded pianist plays any selection requested. One of the boys asked for the Ohio song. No sooner had the pianist started to play, when the Buckeye boys began to sing to the old tune, "He Wandered"—and they DID sing!

Ohio, Ohio,
The hills throw back the cry;
We're here to do or die;
Ohio, Ohio;
We'll win the war or know the reason why.
And when the war is o'er
We'll swipe the Kaiser's booze,
And we'll drink to old Ohio
Till we wobble in our shoes.
Ohio, Ohio.
We'll win the war or know the reason why.

I do not suppose there were one of three men in the audience from Ohio, but it sounded like an unanimous chorus.

A Captain just returned from New York, where, he says, he left a Major hopelessly drunk, in some friend's apartment.

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, June 24, 1918.

The clerk at Cantonment Personnel Office told me today that they had checked over a million service records and other papers for out-going troops, and the Buckeye Division's work was way and above the most correct and accurate. As far as the M. P's are concerned this should reflect some

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credit on Capt. Schwartz, new Adjutant, and the first real one we have had.

A nigger soldier was walking down street here yesterday, swinging a club, with everybody making room for him. till an artilleryman from our Division passed him, without swerving. The club struck his arm. He leaned back, then forward—the black boy landed in the road. * * *

Several of the camp M. P's—"disability men"—tried to be hard with these boys. Result: Two or three Upton M. P 's with disfigured countenances. Takes our boys to handle the Division, without trouble.

---

(Letter) Camp Upton, L. I., N. Y.,
June 25, 1918.

Went to Gas-House this morning and passed thru chlorine gas. There was absolutely no difference in being in the gas or fresh air, with the masks.

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## TRANSPORT DAYS

IT was Thursday, June the 27th, 1918, when our superiors inaugurated a policy which was thereafter to be inflexibly pursued. This was the law that all troop movements must be made "under cover of darkness." We had had a foretaste of this most prudent strategy on arriving at Camp Upton at 11:30 p. m., detraining in great haste and marching to our strange barracks at midnight.

On this occasion, Reveille was at 2:30 a. m. My diary reads:

(Diary) June 27, 1918.

Made blanket-roll, folded and stacked cot, ate two bologna sandwiches and fell in at 5:45 a. m. Marched to train, all wearing spurs, carrying rolls, saddle bags, tin hats and rifles. Detrained about 10 a. m. Embarked on the Hoboken ferryboat "Scandinavia," which took us down the North River, past the water fronts of Manhattan and Brooklyn. This impressed me more than a dozen trips on land, with the overwhelming magnitude of New York's industry and the steel and crystal beauty of her modernity.

Landed in South Brooklyn about half a mile below the Statue. Waited on docks of Munch, Edye & Co., for half an hour. Elderly Red Cross ladies served us coffee, a bun and a package of cigarets; our first food since the 3 a. m. sandwiches.

About noon we took the fatal steps up the narrow, sharply-inclined gang-plank, each man being checked from the passenger lists we had so laboriously prepared.

We were herded to our assigned quarters, two decks below the main, forward. The hold has a disgusting, musty smell, but it must be borne.

Our transport is "the good ship Nestor," as it was invariably (and, I am afraid, ironically) phrased; of the Blue-

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Funnel Line; 595 feet long, and said to be capable of 18 knots an hour. She had been in the Australian trade, with passengers a secondary consideration before the war.

Our quarters were filled with mess tables, above which were slung canvas hammocks, the latter so closely that they touched. I had great difficulty with my strange couch; my inevitable tendency was to hang on the brink, if I may call it that; but I managed to stay in, which was more than two of the fellows did; they fell, with a crash, onto the tables below.

We laid at dock all night.

---

(Overseas Letter No. 1)

Board Ship; an Atlantic Port.
(Not Dated, But Written June 27, 1918.)

My first censored letter! We are not permitted to say where we are or how we got here, or when we leave.

Our boat * * * (deleted) * * * with (deleted) * *; how many it is impossible to say. It is large; I would say about * * * (deleted) * * * are quartered * * * (deleted) * * * in a musty, stuffy forecastle, sleeping in hammocks, elbow to elbow, so close that if one man swings we all do.

---

(Diary) Friday, June 28, 1918.

Up at 6; stewed beef, bread and coffee for breakfast.

About 8:30 two little tugs, which fussed about us all yesterday afternoon, came up determinedly, took lines, and swung us out into the river.

Very slowly we slipped down the bay, choked with launches, tugs, one-, two-, three- and four-funneled steamers, and one-, two-, three- and four-masted sailing vessels. I identified English, French, Spanish, Dutch and Greek shipping.

When we reached the lower bay our fleet took on a distinct form. There were fourteen ships, in more or less rigid formation. An American cruiser, its battle-gray contrasting with the cubistic vagaries of blue, yellow, green, gray, black

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and white camouflage, guarded the fleet on our starboard, while a converted cruiser, formerly an English liner, was on the port. A string of toy-like destroyers circled the horizon in a steady, watchful milling. Overhead two big sea-planes soared, muttering, with vibrant propellors, dire threats to the U-boats. On the same mission a dirigible, its aluminum bag looking for all the world like a Havana in tinfoil, sailed silently over us.

The sea was calm, according to all mariners' ideas; but, in the belief of the beginner at ocean travel, we made heavy weather. One by one the lubbers "tied calves" to the tune of jeers and jokes in loud, derisive chorus. Then, like as not, he who had laughed loudest (recklessly holding open his mouth for too long a time) would become the butt. Strange to say, these Super-Men, the Commissioned Officers, were, in this respect, on a level with the lowliest buck private; and many a course meal, eaten from china, on linen, and with silver, suffered the same fate as a coarse meal, eaten from aluminum, on pine and with tin.

It is not Death who is "the greatest leveller of rank and condition;" it's Mal-de-Mer.

It grew very cold as the afternoon waned and a wool jersey, blouse and overcoat were none too warm.

The shores of America faded to a memory—and a hope. Darkness fell over the waters. Who can express our feelings as we felt each throb of the powerful screw bear us further and further away from home and happiness, and nearer and nearer to certain hardship, loneliness; and, for some, pain and death?

But after all, youth is youth, and the spirit of d'Artagnan lives now under shrapnel-proof helmets as once under feathered hats; carrying automatic pistols instead of rapiers. So, despite our thoughts of what lay behind, we were full of interest in all that was about us and of excited speculation on what laid ahead.

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That night I spent with Brooks, Wilking, 1st Sgt. Hart and Sgts. Ott and Allder of "B" Co., in a little steward's pantry. The air below was heavy enough to sink the boat. I slept on a narrow, metal-covered sink, just wide enough to hold me uncomfortably. The side-wall was very hot, being next to some engine. Slept nine hours thus.

(Diary) Saturday, June 29, 1918.

My cold is worse. Otherwise this trip is fine. It is the cold alone which makes me semi-nauseated. So far, I have held my own—down.

The fog, which has lifted and dropped again frequently, is now dispersed and I see that our aerial and naval convoy have left us, excepting one cruiser and one destroyer. I was surprised to learn that we carried one light astern last night, to guide the following ships; also to hear the fog-horns; having supposed absolute darkness and silence were required on account of the U-boats.

Twice a day we have "abandon ship" drill, when we assemble in places designated for each unit ready to follow the rafts, which will be flung overboard in case of disaster. (The life boats are reserved for the officers.)

Then we stand there half to three-quarters of an hour, while the officers, count, recount, discount, report and fuss about.

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(Diary) Sunday, June 30, 1918.

The whistling last night was the means of averting a collision with the transport on our starboard, which loomed up out of the fog much too close for comfort.

The last trip of the "Nestor" was from Australia, when the water ran short. Signs forbidding shaving are still posted. I am obeying them, as they have been neither rescinded nor revoked.

Saw a school of fat and happy dolphins cavorting thru the waves today. A sample damphool lieutenant asked me if they were sharks!

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When we awoke this morning saw a big fleet ahead of us, apparently having lost ground (or should I say, water?) in the night. So our fourteen ships are but a part of this wonderful armada! Even they form a splendid sight—something never before seen in the history of the world. Ancient fleets have sailed with more craft, but each of our ships carries two to ten thousand men.

Today is the first day I have seen the blue of the sea. It only obtains when the sun shines. It is a beautiful, cool blue.

---

(Diary) Monday, July 1, 1918.

Slept ten hours. The sea is very calm. The sun shines. I have shaved. I feel better.

Among the expedients devised to while away the monotony of ship life was a mock-trial. "Cy" Robinson was accused of some absurd crime and summoned before a monkey court-martial. As I recall it now, the presiding officer was "Tip" O'Neil. Geo. Sommers was prosecutor and Johnny Baker "Cy's" defender. Members of the court were Hatfield, Steinmetz, Powers, Herb Miller, Lard Planitz, Francis Scott, Bill Wehman, Bob Gillis, and others.

Sommers conducted a vigorous cross-examination. The defense waived. "Cy" was found guilty and sentenced to run the gauntlet. He became desperate with fright, grabbed a knife from the mess-table near him and went after his persecutors. The crowd was panic-stricken. Some fell backward, some leaped over tables, or crawled under them, men knocking each other over in their frantic efforts to get out of his way.

The joke decidedly was not on "Cy."

(Letter) Somewhere on the Atlantic,
July (deleted) 1918.

Sergeant Ott ("B" Co.) and I are sleeping on a grating laid across a disused stairway. It is hard and draughty, but

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I will not stay in the hold with the bad air and that sickening motion.

I read all day. The Y. M. C. A. has a library on board which is a God-send. The voyage would be unutterably dull and wretched without it.

Just heard a rousing speech by Major C——. He had an argument with Colonel Bush, of the Artillery (a big, windy fellow) about men being allowed on this saloon deck. The Colonel remarked that he had more trouble with M. P's than all other troops together. Then C—— burst out:

"I will stand for no such remarks about my men," said he. "Look at them! (Gesture.) They are the finest, cleanest body of men you would want; everyone a gentleman."

It was long and inspirited—in fact I would underline the syllable "spirit" if the censor would not object. Anyway, it's one mark in the Major's favor; once, at least, he "stood up for his men;" that cardinal virtue which an enlisted man demands of an officer if the latter wants willing, loyal obedience.

The "bloody English" tried to feed us on TRIPE, the very sight of which would turn a decent man's stomach.

About the third time this was served, Mess Sgt. Connelley sent Gus Beal up to throw the stuff over the rail and report that we would not eat it.

This heroic measure produced results. It was understood that our officers told the ship authorities to omit that item from the menu. At any rate, it never appeared again.

Except for TRIPE the meals are not so bad; but I eat very little of them. Buy crackers and ginger ale at the canteen. It is only open three hours a day; and the line-up extends nearly around the ship.

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(Continued) Independence Day, 1918.[1]

Still the blue seas shrug their shoulders with the ennui of infinity as the Yankee Armada presses on * * * They say tonight, tomorrow and tomorrow night will be the dangerous hours. If you get this, I am safe and well. If this never comes, you will eventually hear from the War Department, and I shall have given my all for the cause.

---

1(Note that the Censor sedulously cut off all dates on these letters, but passed up the heading "Independence Day.")

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This puts a man face to face with his God; and, as I have stood at the rail, watching the tireless swirl and surge of the froth-flecked blue and green waters, I have thanked Him for you.

(Two-thirds page of facts reflecting on army morals deleted by Censor.)

The Star-Spangled Banner was played at Reveille this morning. About 10 a. m. the modest ship's doctor, a big, jolly Scot, with the reddest, leatheriest face you ever imagined, made some appropriate remarks about the unity of England and America. The Stars and Stripes were run up the foremast, while the Union Jack still hung * * * (more deleted) * * *

The largest ship in our convoy, a beautiful, four-funneled steamer, whose position was off our port bow, was said to carry several hundred Red Cross Nurses. Naturally, this rumor excited considerable speculation and argument. Taking advantage of this popular discussion, the Y. M. C. A. Secretary posted a notice on the ship's Bulletin Board reading something like this:

"INDEPENDENCE DAY DANCE.

"There will be a dance on board the '————' on the evening of July Fourth. The Red Cross Nurses will be hostesses to the officers and men of the fleet.

"Tickets will be sold only to men presenting a pass from their commanding officers. Transportation will be provided."

I value the friendship of my M. P. buddies too highly to give the names of the men who took this hoax seriously, but their number was astonishing. It was a sore point with some of them for months thereafter.

(Letter) On Board Some Ship or Other,
Somewhere on Some Ocean,
Sometime in July, 1918.
(Written July 7, 1918.)

The Censorship Rules (yes, the Censorship is the name of this boat, but I must not tell you) have been read aloud

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to us, and from what I gather we may write that "we are well;" and I doubt if it would be advisable to say, "We are unwell."[2] Last night the sea was of an unbelievable smoothness. A French officer, who has been a traveller, told one of our officers that he had never seen any ocean so smooth—not even the proverbially flat Adriatic.

We have been getting radio news regularly and it is posted on a bulletin board, so we are not dead to the world at all.

---

(Letter) The Next Tuesday.
(Not dated—written July 9.)

Nearing our port. Have been in sight of land since early this morning. Is it trite to say, "A sight for sore eyes"?

The next six or twelve hours before we land will probably be the tensest. However, we are well taken care of. and I do not worry.

---

(Diary) July 9, 1918.

Now in Irish Sea. Expect to reach Liverpool at midnight. Were picked up by convoy of destroyers yesterday. They have been very active and are quite reassuring. One fired three shots yesterday, way off to starboard. The gunners on this ship claim she got a sub. No one knows. But a bunch of the destroyers scurried over there, highly excited.

These last few hours are the most dangerous.

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(Diary) July, 9, 1918.

Arrived at Liverpool; midnight; safe!

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[2]The alert Censor tried to block out last three words but they are still legible. Suspicious but inefficient bird.

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## REST-CAMPING IN ENGLAND

NE of my sincerest regrets has been that I obeyed army orders so strictly. As time went by it became clear that I could safely have done many entirely innocent things that were **Verboten**; like carrying cameras, as many officers and men did, to my personal knowledge. However, I did have nerve enough to keep a diary overseas despite J. J. P.; and this little book, oilskin-covered and carried in an oilskin-lined medical canvas bag which I salvaged from our M. D's, is very precious to me.

It has already been quoted. Its record reads on:

(Diary) July 10, 1918.

Woke up to find ship in middle of Mersey river, between Liverpool and Birckhead.

Debarked at 2:30 p. m. Marched thru Liverpool, with blanket-roll, saddle-bag, rifle, tin-hat and overcoat. Our hobnails on the cobble-stones, wet with frequent showers, made difficult footing. A hard hike, but we got a royal welcome. Women and children went wild over us; cheered and clapped.

"Good luck!" "Good cheer!" "Pull the Kaiser's nose!" "Good bye, ye!" and various other hearty exhortations come from all. Miniature American flags were quite numerous.

Saw no fighting-age men in civilian clothes, but many soldiers and sailors, wounded or on leave.

Arrived REST Camp (Knotty Ash) at 5:30. I just made it. Eleven men from our company and eighteen from "B" Company dropped out. We slept eighteen men to a small tent.

Women and girls hung about outside camp in swarms. Most of the boys broke camp. I took a cold bath—but it was fresh and not salt water—and went to bed.

It is unbelievably cold here for mid-July; and light till eleven o'clock at night.

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(Letter) An American Rest Camp,
Somewhere in England,
July 10, 1918.

Writing by day-light, at 9:15 p. m.

Our ship made harbor about midnight. We had an awful five-mile hike out here, after our inactivity on ship-board. Our mess last night was hard-tack (made in Toledo!), sardines, beans, bully and jam. Welcome change from ship's rations.

It is most fascinating to get one's money changed into pence, shillings, florins and crowns.

Was intensely interested in the city. You would have known the country was at war. The spirit is wonderful—sublime! Not a hint of giving in. Never! And how they welcomed us! Cheers and applause. Hundreds of kids followed us all the way to this camp, carrying coats, rifles—anything we would let them.

Talked with a very nice woman, about 50 years of age. on one of our brief halts. She wore a miniature of her son, who has been fighting three and a half years, without a scratch. She was born and bred in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada—not far from my home.

Some of these good people brought and gave us cakes and tiny meat-pies, as we rested. Those who could not afford that carried us pitchers of cold water.

---

(Diary) July 11, 1918.

Rested in morning. Left at 12:30 p. m. Hiked half an hour to station, in heavy rain. But we felt cheerful; sang and yelled as we marched. Got same enthusiastic cheers from people. Stayed in cattle-pens while waiting for train.

Each squad had an apartment; four men sitting on each seat. Third-class car; red-plush seats. Not uncomfortable. Traveled much faster than I imagined we would. The famous "Petite Squad" of Cooks Bishop and Spicer, Pvts. Heileman, Hyde, Osborne, Trares and Wise and myself, is pretty well organized and we had a great time.

Beautiful country—beautiful. Land rolling. Fields cultivated to Nth degree; not a square yard wasted. Big, fat

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cattle. Pretty stone or brick homes. None of the old shacks one sees in agricultural America.

Hand-waving and cheers at every station.

Detrained at Windsor. Awful hike up a steep 2½-mile hill at an awful pace. Everyone growling. Stuck to it and made it. Nearly exhausted when we arrived at Winnall Downs REST Camp, at 10 p. m. Usual standing, under full pack, while officers tried to find our barracks.

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(Letter) Another American REST Camp.
(Date deleted; written July 12.

Suppose we'll get fish today.[1] * * *

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(Continued) A Channel Port, England,
(Written at Southampton, July 13.)

I never saw such beautiful country as old England. I am in love with it. All the fellows gave it their heartiest praise, even the greenest of the Irish.

Every inch of ground is cultivated; every field a geometrical triumph of straight rows and square corners. Neatly-trimmed hedges border the plots. Trees cluster on little knolls or fringe streams or occasional canals. Pretty, quaint, but comfortable and substantial stone or brick homes are scattered about; and a flower-garden with every home. (These flower-gardens make one smile "the louder" when one thinks of the fool men and women in America, with her thousands of uncultivated acres, plowing up school-grounds, tennis-courts, etc., to plant vegetables!)

These people know how to LIVE. It is not all a scramble for Money.

The city homes are similar to Philadelphia's—miles of identical stone houses, with high, insular, stone or brick walls about tiny plots, beautiful with bloom and blossom. A smile, a hand-flutter and a cheer from every home for the Yanks. One British mother held both arms out to us, as if

1 (This to convey fact that it was Friday. Slipped one over on Censor.)

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she would take every boy from the States to her and hug him a maternal welcome.

Passed thru a big city[2]; also a famous university town.[3]

About all in when we arrived at the second camp[4] at twilight (10:30 p. m.)

Slept on dirty straw ticks placed on three boards which were, in turn, laid on two little trestles about four inches from the floor. If you wish to approximate this novel bed, try a snooze on an ironing board.

Up at 7 (Saturday). Good bacon, fine brown bread and hot coffee went fine for breakfast. Bath, etc., in morning. To my surprise—despite dirty barracks—no unwelcome guests have made an appearance as yet.

After working in afternoon, went to British Army and Navy Canteens and bought chocolate at one penny (2 cents) a stick; also real English toffee. Pretty English girls presided. The Y. M. C. A. here is also very good; it sells goods very reasonably.

Corp. Paul Johnson, Pvt. Henry, his brother, Corp. "Hi" Myers and I played cards in a large tent next the YM. From our seats, we looked out across a valley toward a clump of trees on a high hill, a landmark for miles. It was there, tradition says, that Julius Caesar held a conference with the savage Britanni.

The town[5] (they tell me) has the second largest cathedral in England; built in 1056, before the Conquest. The present King, when Prince of Wales, lived on an estate which we passed on the march from the town to the camp.

Up till midnight last night, drawing rations, etc. Awakened at 4 a. m., in order to leave here at 7:45! Short hike—down hill—and a short train-ride to this port.

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(Diary) Saturday, July 13.

. . . . Laid on wharves at S(outhampton) from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. Played cards. Smoked. Slept.

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2Birmingham.
3Oxford.
4Winnall Downs.
5Winchester.

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**Saw two ships in dry-docks waiting to have repaired great holes torn by Hun torpedoes. And they told us a sub had never hit a ship in the Channel!**

**Boarded (St. George) and sailed at 6. Interesting trip down river and bay. Our ship a greyhound for speed. Locked up in a dark, almost hermetically sealed hold. An awful night.**

Will we ever forget that night on the Channel? It was a night of mental horrors and physical discomforts.

The three-hundred-steenth M. P 's went across with us and one of their N. A. captains was put in charge, as Officer of the Day. The memory of that damned ruffian will make any of us see red. He was a rough-neck and low-brow—and proud of it. First Lieutenant Grannan, of our company, was Officer of the Guard, and while he stood by in enforced silence, this dirty dog of a draft-captain took advantage of his extra silver bar to make a speech, insulting Grannan and us all by casting slurs on the National Guard, etc. It was all uncalled for, and deliberately done to provoke us. I wonder how red-headed Grannan stood it, good soldier tho he was.

Most of the guard that night was drawn from these drafted M. P 's, and we were forced to go below decks. The poor man who used to boast mournfully that, at least, water and air were free, never served in an Utterly Servile Army. We were forbidden to remain in the fresh air and were herded like so many animals into the black hold. When fatigue overcame us, we laid down on a heap of sleeping comrades, nestling on a tin helmet or a rifle, with our hob-nailed feet resting in another's face.

Air could not have been staler or viler, without passing into the category of solid substances. The port holes could not be opened for fear someone

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would show a light; yet, with these locked tight, our illogical masters allowed us no illumination inside.

Had a torpedo struck the ship we would all have drowned like rats in a trap.

When I mentioned the brutal Captain of these draft M. P 's, I overlooked his co-adjutor, the first sergeant of his company. Never have I seen an uglier, more degenerate face upon any man—white, black, brown or yellow. To compare his physiognomy to an ape would be an insult to the whole animal kingdom. Jack Dempsey would look like little Lord Fauntleroy beside him. It is impossible to describe this being without profanity. * * * He was zealous in rivalling his captain in appearing "Hard;" but it warms my heart when I remember one boy in "B" company who "knocked him for a row" when he tried to prevent the former from emerging from the hold.

There was more than one encounter of this sort on that dark night when we ran the gauntlet from England to France.

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# FRANCE

(Diary) July 14, 1918.

ARRIVED H(avre), France, at 2 or 3 a. m. Rain. Debarked 7 a. m. Rain. The city was decorated in celebration of Bastile Day—not of the arrival of the Hundred-and-Twelfth M. P's, as some of the simple members wanted to believe. As we marched thru the streets, children begged "Un sou, un sou? . . Souvenir? . . Cigarette?" while women sold us chocolate and oranges at terrible prices.

Had a bad four-mile march up hill to another REST CAMP. (Ye Gods! The brutal irony of that phrase! Always on the crest of a steep hill (or beyond it); a long march from the station or wharf, with inadequate sleeping and practically no bathing accommodations, English sanitary arrangements—impossible to describe—scanty, and poor food: and WORK in all spare—rest—hours. The last was the final straw. I, personally, escaped these work-details, but it made me boil to see the other fellows, just in from a heart-breaking hike; tired, cold, hungry and wretched, forced to dig ditches and other hard manual labor, when, theoretically. they were resting.)

Heard with a thrill that we were only 80 miles from The Front. Tents are camouflaged. A few have wooden floors; rest, nice soft MUD. Camp surrounded with barbed wire. A few girls and children loitered outside.

Found out Capt. A—— has not yet sent any of the letters we wrote on shipboard or in England.

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(Diary) Monday, July 15.

Left camp at noon. Hiked down to city again. Pretty tough. Boarded horse-cars at 4 p. m. Rode all night, 43 in our tiny car. Very crowded. Slept a little.

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(Diary) Tuesday, July 16.

Rode all day. Many squabbles about seating space. Ate canned beef, tomatoes, jam and hardtack.

---

(Dairy) Wednesday, July 17.

Arrived B(ourmont), H(aute) M(arne), early in morning. Marched up steepest hill I ever climbed.

Who of us will ever forget that first troop-train ride in France? Forty-three of us in a tiny French box car meant that it was impossible for all to be seated at once. Some of us staked claims off to tiny corners, where we squatted all day. The rest stood about the open sliding-doors, watching the scenery. Then, when night came, they expected us provident ones to relinquish our little corners. Our refusals brought hot arguments and much bad feeling.

Water was obtained from large pipes intended to fill the engine-boilers. It was usually necessary for one hero to become quite thoroughly drenched, to enable the rest to drink. This water was often labelled, in both English and French, Undrinkable, but we are all alive today despite it!

To add to our sufferings, the supply of Bull and Humps unexpectedly ran short and we were reduced to the horrible expedient of buying French cigarettes. Viler than asafoetida, blacker than Hades and more odorous than a pole-cat, these pills carried, not a kick, or a punch, but a knock-out in every puff.

Our route was up the Seine valley, thru Rouen, skirting Paris at Versailles; swinging south thru Troyes, etc., and then east. We arrived, after nearly forty hours, at the village of Bourmont, Haute Marne, in the prettiest country **le Bon Dieu** ever planned. But we were not quite there, for Bourmont sat upon a hill, and a mighty hill. Boys, will ya' ever forget that grade?

I was billeted at No. 38 Rue de Vivier, which was half mountain trail and half alley, but called a

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street. Our billet was an old disused stone cottage, doorless and paneless and very dirty, as the men of some regular army division had left it, months before.

No sooner were we settled than the rest of the men disappeared, in search of liquid refreshments. I remained alone, to change clothing for a swim. I was reduced to underwear only, when I looked up to see a pretty young woman standing on the threshold. She greeted me with a pleasant "**Bon jour, monsieur,**" and I stammered a "**Bon jour, mademoiselle.**" She seemed not a whit embarrassed at my **deshabille,** but ignored it superbly. I was panic-stricken as she continued to advance. I managed to arise, clutching, with a desperate grip, the nether portion of my undress-uniform.

The girl bore a large bowl of gooseberries as a gift to the new **soldats Americains,** which she offered me with a smile. I thanked her and, to my infinite relief, she left. The popular phrase of the moment came into my mind: "So THIS is France?"

After I recovered, I threw on some clothes, walked back down the hill, and across the railroad track to the Meuse river. The water was deliciously cool on that hot day and there were many of us Yanks enjoying it. Two or three hundred yards away French women worked in the fields or walked by, gazing at us—frankly, not slyly. I was learning quickly the Gallic lack of our mock-modesty.

(Letter) July (date deleted.)

(Written at Bourmont, about July 17, 1918.)

We are billeted in a pretty—and dirty—village on a hilltop, back of a front whose name I cannot tell you. Must be many miles away, as we cannot hear any noise of battle.

Found I could have sent a cablegram, after all. Some did so. The Y. M. C. A. man at our first Rest-Camp urged them to do it. However, Capt. A—— told us it was forbidden.

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(Diary) Thursday, July 18, 1918.

Spent evening with a group, talking to people across the street. The girl who brought me the berries lives there —Mlle. Marguerite. She knows a few English words. Told us the other American troops would yell at her, "Allo, cheeken." We continued her English education by teaching her to say "Isch-ka-bibble."

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(Diary) Friday, July 19, 1918.

Walked way up to the top of the hill. Some ancient ruins there. A wonderful view of hills and valleys, trees and streams, roads and rich fields. All the Routes Nationales are bordered with poplars, and one can trace them for many miles.

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(Letter) July 20, 1918.

Eight o'clock of a pleasant evening. I am seated on a stone wall at 38 Rue de Vivier. The street here is some ten feet wide, paved with small, rough stones and very steep. The houses are of stone and are built flush with the street—no sidewalks. In each home, the stone sinks are placed before the front window and the waste water flows down shallow gutters in front. The main street, below, is wider and the spaces at the front door serve as barnyards. You know the French concentrate their farm-houses in villages like this, either from habit or to conserve ground. Their horses and cows are quartered in barns beside or below their dwellings. The stock is sleek and fat. Numerous cats, dogs and poultry wander about the streets.

The people are very kind, polite and anxious to do everything for us. Of course, the boys favor them in many ways, by giving odds and ends.

We are greatly excited about (probably exaggerated) stories of wonderful American victories. They say Foch predicts the end of the war in six weeks if this keeps up. How I wish I could read the daily papers.

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(Continued, Sunday, July 21.)

I did not walk way down to our kitchen, at the foot of the hill, for breakfast, but instead was given a big bowl of milk by the good people across the street. How welcome it was.

We are eating splendidly now at our kitchen, however; steak, roast beef, fritters, etc. Couldn't ask for better. As for the French, I think (if the Censor pleases) that conditions are not nearly so bad as one might expect. Of course, bread, sugar and meat are scarce, as in America; but the people are healthy and seem to have plenty. They do not seem worried about the outcome of the war, but very confident.

Next to our French Canadian, Giroux, I have the best success of any in the company in carrying on conversations with the French. Of course, they frequently rattle off a long sentence which I do not understand, or only partially; then I smile and say "Oui, oui," and they think I "compree."

There is no evidence of race-suicide here; the streets are full of children, pretty, plump and happy. I suppose many conditions are different in the large cities.

So far (one week) this war is fine. No complaint whatever. Pershing says "HELL, HEAVEN, or HOBOKEN by Christmas." I'm with him.

Don't worry. This is a wonderful and most interesting experience.

---

MILITARY POLICE, ..... DIVISION.

(Letter) A Town in France, July 24, 1918.
(Written at Baccarat, Muerthe & Moselle)

You will note the mutilated condition of this familiar printed heading; it is done in compliance with censorship regulations. Of course, you can't guess what Division it is!

We are quartered in a large room of an enormous factory, a pottery or glass factory; very large, indeed; and still being operated to some extent.

Entrained night before last (July 22) and traveled comfortably. Instead of 43 there were only 30 in a car, and the

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floor was covered with clean straw.[1] Detrained at dawn and set out on a hike.

At B——[2] we discarded all but one blanket, one uniform, two shirts, two suits underwear, four pairs sox. All personal stuff was put in barracks-bags and "stored." I left knitted stuff, etc., there to the value of about $40. May never see it again. Our officers tell us that we will return in four months and get it back.[3]

Even with these things omitted, the pack was very heavy, as we had to carry, in addition to clothing enumerated, the following: toilet articles, extra hob-nails, shelter-half, slicker, gas-mask, .45 automatic, 100 rounds of rifle and 40 rounds of pistol ammunition, rifle, saddle-bag, spurs, steel helmet, three big cans (beans, beef, tomatoes), hardtack, etc.

I tried my very darndest, but after a couple of hours, I staggered to the edge of the road, laid my rifle down—and fell on it. Laid there, with all equipment on, for five minutes. Utterly exhausted. Awfully disgusted with myself for falling out, as I had managed to stick it out on the other hikes, but many others were falling out all along the route. Finally caught up with the company again and entered this town with them. Had a good night's sleep on one blanket and a slicker, on the bare floor here.

This town was in the Huns' filthy hands for three weeks in 1914. It is mutilated terribly. It was a shock to leave old B——[2] with its peaceful atmosphere, and march thru the hamlets near the front—scarred, smashed and torn by war. Still these incomparable French peasants live in them and do their day's work. As we neared the front, each village bore increasingly the sad score of the invader. Not a church was untouched.

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1For the extra space, thanks were due 1st Sgt. Brooks, who lied like a gentleman to obtain enough cars for us to travel semi-decently.

2Bourmont.

3Note: Of course we never saw it again. Within a few hours the bags were "salvaged"—looked thru and rifled.

I received my barracks bag in April, 1920, but minus all the valuable contents.

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This hike was one of the most criminal things we suffered. We arrived at the village of Moyen before daylight; 'way, 'way behind the lines. But our officers were panic-stricken and ordered us out of the cars before they even stopped. Capt A——, in particular, was excited and cursed us volubly. Then, loaded, as I wrote, with our mounted equipment on our backs, extra rations were piled on us. Stiff and cramped and hardly awakened from our night on the box-cars, we were started off without breakfast. Four of my squad were detailed to stay behind; the other four had to carry double.

Major C—— was not with us—I believe he got himself a limousine. Capt. Van G—— of "B" Company was in command.

After marching about an hour we were halted. Had we been told, we could have eaten; but no orders were given and only a few ventured to open cans as we expected to fall in again at any moment. So we marched hungry.

Van, a big, powerful man, forced a terrific pace, much faster than the regulation, with scarcely any other halts. The march was such a terrible one that the next day we received a communication from the Division Chief of Staff demanding an explanation. Maj. C—— passed the buck in a true military manner, by saying he had not been in command. Capt. A—— escaped likewise.. In Van G——'s indorsement, which I saw myself, statements very much at variance with the real facts excused him satisfactorily.

Most of the NCO's of both companies, as well as a good percentage of privates, were forced to drop out.

Civilians may not know that officers never carry packs when they hike,

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(Letter) A French Town,[3a]
July 24, 1918.

This IS a town—not a village. Here (and on the march yesterday) we can hear the intermittent booming of the guns. It does not sound very terrifying.

I am intensely interested in this beautiful country and its people. If they only had American standards of sanitation, etc., I would admire them much more. They seem very cleanly about their persons and dress. The women, in holiday dress, seem to have the latest styles, as far as I can tell. Suppose Paris extends her influence to the smallest hamlet. I have seen many pretty girls, but no beauties.

I have received one letter since I left the States—a week ago. One of the boys saw two sacks of mail lying in a puddle last night.

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(Diary) Thursday, July 25.

Awakened at 10:30 p. m. by explosions, bell and bugle. Went to dug-out, below cellar. After a few minutes of quiet. some returned above, but I remained. Shortly, louder explosions, and those hardy ones rushed down again. . . We went back to bed at 11:30.

About 1 a. m. a third alarm took us back down. Not very scared.

Our first night under fire. This was a "Jerry" with his load of bombs trying to deliver the goods—"Made in Germany." We escaped unharmed but none of us will ever forget the menacing note of the recurring crescendo drone of his motor, the steady purring of the allied pursuers and the crack of the anti-air-craft shrapnel.

(Letter) July 27, 1918.

I'm wearing my overseas cap now; a nobby little affair, bounded on the north by a pompadour, on the west by a part, on the east by my right ear, and on the south by my neck. It

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3aBaccarat.

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is a dandy arrangement for indoors wear; very chic and petite, also nifty and snappy. It is also practical for warm nights; or cloudy days. For sun or rain it is no good. Now, I hope Secretary Baker does not get up on his ear over my criticism—the cap is already on mine.

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(Diary) July 28, 1918.

Awoke in middle of night. Noise and confusion. Men were rushing about. First thot was that an aerial bomb had hit us. Learned, however, that Pvt. P——'s automatic had been discharged in the holster, tearing a hole thru his hand. He claims he was asleep.

This case was fully investigated by Capt. A—— and Col. Barger, Division Inspector. The evidence was quite conclusive that it was a self-inflicted wound and that P——, frightened by his proximity to the front, had determined to be sent to a hospital in the rear.

We transferred him to a base hospital and never heard whether or not he was found guilty and punished.

An interesting aftermath of this deplorable affair occurred while the company was at Bertrichamps.

Private Q——, also a draft replacement man from Indiana, took occasion to bring up P——'s case with me, asking what I thot his punishment would be.

I answered that he would probably be awarded the S. I. W. (Self Inflicted Wound) brassard, the badge of cowardice, and placed at disagreeable work at some dangerous point.

"Would they shoot him?" inquired Q—— anxiously.

"They might," I replied. "But I think not."

It was only a few days after this when Q——'s rifle "accidentally" discharged, the ball tearing thru his foot.

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He was disposed of in a similar manner and we never learned his fate.

(Letter) July 28, 1918.

Keep on planning the menu for my Welcome Home Banquet. Tips: NO corned beef; NO boiled potatoes; NO evaporated-applesauce; NO beans; NO stew; NO half-cooked rice; NO Red Seal Lye coffee, with canned milk; NO fat bacon, and NO chemical jam.

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(Diary) Monday, July 29.

Another air-raid. Alarm-bell and bugles woke us up at 11 p. m. Rushed down to cellar. Laid in dirty straw and went to sleep. Woke at 1:45 a. m. and went back above.

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(Diary) Tuesday, July 30.

Another clear night and another raid. Shrapnel from anti-aircraft guns very close to us. One piece struck roof above me and I awoke, showered with the dislodged dust.

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(Diary) July 30, 1918.

I wandered about last night on the other side of the river and saw the old trenches, shallow affairs, where the gallant French held off the hell-Huns in 1914. They are overgrown with grass now and breathe peace rather than war, as one stands in them overlooking the pretty river,[4] whose dark waters flow before them. Some of the poor fellows who defended them are at Peace now—a far more wonderful peace and a far surer peace than that for which we are laboring and praying.

There are also to be seen barbed-wire entanglements. dug-outs and other visible emblems of that death-grip in which France held the invader.

Tomorrow I am to get that threatened bath. It is impossible to get one here, unless you can prove yourself to be a Commissioned Officer. The showers are For Officers Only.

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[4]Meurthe.

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(Treasonable Query: Do officers get dirtier than enlisted men?)

So I am going to take one in the river here, a safe distance above the dam. Have not bathed for eight days.

Well, I got me two potato-sacks full of hay for tonight, so I will sleep somewhat softer and warmer — tho some horse hunger.

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(Letter) July 31, 1918.

Met a fellow from our Division Engineers here this afternoon. He told me about the troubles our Infantry and Engineers had at Camp Lee, after leaving Sheridan. The drafted M. P 's there greeted the Ohio N. G. on their arrival with: "Why are the strike-breakers coming here? There's no riot," etc., etc.

There WAS a riot, and before it was over three of the draftees were killed. Our boys started nothing, but they finished.

Now we, the Divisional M. P's, stand ace-high. We have no trouble in handling them.

The Division has a great esprit-de-corps. I was surprised to find we hold an enviable reputation, which preceded us here. The Buckeye will make history.

George Richards stopped here this afternoon and we had a brief chat, until he left abruptly. I'll tell you about that some day.[5]

When Wilking and I were bathing this afternoon, beyond a distant hill we saw an observation balloon rise. It was up perhaps 20 minutes, then hurriedly descended, probably frightened by planes. Think it was a German sausage.

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(Diary) Thursday, Aug. 1, 1918.

Left town of B(accarat) for village of B(ertrichamps). on company forage wagon. Only a short ride, down a beautiful valley, with tree-clothed hills on both sides. Our billet

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5As this estimable young man was chatting happily with me, came to our ears Jerry's buzzing motor and the alarm in full daylight.

I turned, picked up my helmet—and, lo, George was out of sight!

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is a one-story cement factory, the front two-thirds of which is occupied by a Salvation Army canteen. We sleep in good bunks, made of chicken-wire.

This move was occasioned by the dividing of the Division area into two parts for military police work, each company having a sub-area to itself. We had our headquarters in Bertrichamps, while "B" Company operated from Baccarat. The Major stayed in the town.

There were more mademoiselles in Baccarat than in Bertrichamps.

In this sector we relieved the muchly-advertised 77th Division; probably the worst combat division of the A. E. F. They were mainly New York Jews. They surely hated the idea of a fight. All combat divisions looked upon them as a humorous incident of the war, which was only intensified when they got their notoriety by Losing a Battalion in the Argonne. Being the first draft division in France, it was up to the G. H. Q. or the War Department to make them heroes on paper, no matter what they were in fact. This was done and the gullible American public looks upon them as the cream of the Yank forces; and Maj. (now Lt. Col.) W——— who any officer or soldier will tell you should have been court-martialed, was promoted and given a Congressional Medal! And when this division of drafted Jews came home, the New York papers hailed them as the "FIGHTING IRISH!"

(Letter) (Bertrichamps), Aug. 2, 1918.

"Monk" Wilking and I went in the Salvation Army last night to buy something to eat. "Too late; closed." But Monk said we were hungry (true) and had had no supper (partially true), and the fellow in charge slipped us four oranges, refusing to take our money.

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(Letter) Hq. Co. A, 112 Mil. Police,
A. E. F., A. P. O. 763, Aug. 5, 1918.

We got three official documents from Battalion Headquarters today for Pvt. Giroux to translate. He was not here, so I set to work and translated them all but two or three words. When he came he filled them in and we sent it back to Headquarters. Had he not been here, mine would have served to get the meaning. Three weeks in France, on top of two years of high school French, gives me a fair general understanding of spoken as well as written French. None of our officers knows anything of the language.

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(Letter) Tuesday, Aug. 6, 1918.

Another move for yours truly. Yes, I leave here early tomorrow morning, after six pleasant days. An order has been issued that all Company Clerks are to work at Division Headquarters from now on. I hate to leave Capt. A——, "Top" Brooks, Wilking, and the other boys. Brooks and the Captain claim they hate to have me go. Of course there will be lots of clerical work which will still have to be done at Company Headquarters.

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(Diary) Wednesday, Aug. 7, 1918.

Up early. A 8 o'clock Wagoner Oscar King brought up a forage-wagon. Loaded on bulging saddle-bags, enormous roll, rifle and field-desk, and started. Arrived at Battalion Headquarters (Baccarat) at 9—one hour late, but not my fault. However, in about 15 minutes a truck came along and I climbed aboard for eleven or twelve miles of rough riding. Arrived R(ambervillers, Vosges) 10 a. m. Billeted "O. A. S." in truth.[6] Waited from that time till 7:30 p. m. before mess was provided for us. Somebody blundered.

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[6]"O. A. S." on our letters meant "On Active Service," entitling us to free postage; but Charlie Kalb, of Hq. Co., translated it more literally as "Over a Stable"—our customary home.

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(Letter) le Foyer du Soldat,
Union Franco-Americaine, (Y. M. C. A.)
le 8 Aout, 1918.

I am now in the Statistical Section. There are about 100 of us, mostly non-coms, and a very fine class of fellows. Several of us are billeted in a corner of a barn, with tiny round holes in the old stone wall, reminding one irresistibly of the port-holes in the transport. Our bed springs are nice, springy, pine slats, covered with straw-filled ticks—not bad at all. Sgt. Lowry (Private in Headquarters Company in Columbus), and Corp. Green, clerk of "B" Co., with me, represent the M. P 's.

This town is quite large, livelier and cleaner than B——.[6a] It is a fortunate place. In 1914 the Germhun was stopped nearby, and it suffered comparatively little. In 1870 the brute invaders were stopped about 50 yards from our billet. There is a bridge over a narrow, shallow stream, where the gallant French defenders held them for two days behind a barricade; then drove them back. A gentleman living across the street told me all about it—a genuine, bearded Frenchman. To bear out his tale, a restaurant at the bridge bears the sign, "Restaurant de la Barricade." In the public place there is a splendid female statue commemorating the defeat of the Prussians; also there is a street exultantly named "La Rue du 9 Octobre," the historic date, I presume.

Lowry remarked this morning, "In France, the baby-buggy pushed by an old woman is as common as a nigger driving mules in Alabama." Well said; these people convey most everything in them. The climax came when we saw one with an object carefully swaddled in rags. We peered into it and under the wrappings saw a tiny pink and white—pig.

Went thru an old French cemetery yesterday. The approach is very artistic, with a monument to the veterans of '70, surrounded by flowers, trimmed trees and well-kept hedges.

The monuments are rather peculiar and, to us, grotesque.

6aBaccarat.

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One small stone was ornately carved to resemble a church-tower. The lettering is frequently brought out in gold or silver. They are lavish with artificial flowers and bead-work wreaths. These latter bear silver-metal letters "To our dear father," "To our valiant comrade," etc., and are always followed by the words "Regrets." Many say "Oubliée jamais" ("Never forgotten.") These apparently flimsy affairs seem to last for years in fair condition. There are also large glass cases with real flowers imprisoned. One monument had the bust of a pretty young woman in the attitude of prayer and agony, and underneath, the words "To my little Fiancée." The oldest date I noted was 1777.

Beyond the old cemetery is a small military addition where French, Indo-Chinese, African, and two or three Americans are buried. These graves are flat, with designs in colored glass and stones on the ground—work of no mean artistry. The Mohammedans' bore star and crescent, oriental palms and temples. One of the Americans' had the Goddess of Liberty, worked out with power and vitality. . . . . To me it was a most interesting hour. Still the roses bloom above them. Remember our Omar? "Sometimes, methinks, there never blooms so red a rose, as where some buried Caesar bled." . . . . . .

I do not know much French, but he did not either, so, in that respect, we were equal. He was the blackest, shiniest African I ever saw. Lowry asked him, "Compree shoot craps?" He apparently did not, so I tried to talk with him. He replied with a wonderful display of dentistry au naturel and a few words. All I could understand was:- "French no good; American good; British good; French no good; American very good." He was, of course, wearing a French uniform, but had, I presume, some grievance. It was surprising.

How interesting it is to see all the world's fighting men. I have seen Belgian, French, English, Canadian, Italian, African, Indo-Chinese troops and Chinese laborers in the various parts of France.

The French soldiers seem very pleasant and cordial, but make no advances. I think they are liking us better each

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day, as we demonstrate more ability in Hun reduction. The civilians are anxious to do all they can for us, not having the soldier's professional jealousy. The kids are a bit of a bother, always begging "Souvenir, souvenir." They take anything, from empty sacks of Bull to buttons, American pennies tobacco or cigarets. Recently saw one proudly clutching a roll of U. S. A. toilet-paper which a Yank had given him.

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(Letter) le Foyer du Soldat,
le 8 Aug., 1918.

Mais oui—me voilà, dans un Foyer du Soldat—the French idea of a Y. M. C. A. It's not bad, this—pour les Français; but for me—(business of shrugging shoulders). Plenty of French magazines, writing desks, a piano, neat decorations, a charming English-speaking French woman in charge—BUT nothing to eat.

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(Letter) August 9, 1918.

We have gotten used to it and hardly notice it, but I was just thinking how funny it must be, after all, to see us wash and shave and make our complete masculine toilettes at the drinking-troughs here. You know a plumber would starve in France—in the provinces, anyway. Their water supply is obtained from springs, which run into iron or stone troughs, where the horses drink. (Well, we travel in horse-cars; why not wash in horse-troughs?)

There it is, at any rate, that we wash and shave, brush teeth and comb hair, with all the village to watch us, if they wish. And the more youthful portion usually are there to watch us.

I still stick to my "end of the war in 1918" prophecy of two years ago.

Hear the news that the American troops advanced all along the line—(deleted)—and had taken 8,000 prisoners. Also—(deleted)—

At this time my letters were censored by the officer in charge of our section, Captain Ch—. Not a bad old girl at all and quite harmless until given

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a Censor's pencil. Then what a phool he made of himself! The above stuff which he chopped all up was matter of general knowledge and was published in the American papers three or four weeks before my letter arrived there. (Yes, Winifred; he WAS promoted; and came home a Major. One of the lads claimed to have known him and said that as a matter of sober fact he had drawn sodas in his home town. I believe him.)

(Letter) (Written at Rambervillers.)
Aug. 10, 1918.

The discipline in our division is very strict. Way back in B——[7] where they never saw a Hun, afoot or awing, we had to carry gas-masks, helmets and arms, if 20 feet away from billets. The villagers told me that orders were much stricter than in two regular army divisions which had been there. In fact these folks were inclined to smile at our precautions. But then, they were CIVILIANS.

Anyway, we were in the Zone of Operations within ten days after setting foot on French soil. Pershing evidently considered us "fit to fight."

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(Diary) Sunday, Aug. 11th.

Green and I walked out of town, in the afternoon, along a tiny stream, in whose shallow waters French convalescents from l'Hôpital were netting minnows. They apparently make their own sardines, as they do not use them for bait. Walked on and found a pool where we had a bath and short swim. A beautiful day.

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(Letter) August 12th, 1918.

Did I write you about an incident of last Saturday night? I was on my way "home" from le Foyer du Soldat, about 9:15, and stopped at a tiny square (la Place du General Richard, after a local son, who had been a peace-time hero in Paris). At the foot of the General's statue stood a cosmo-

7Bourmont

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politan group listening to a Yank playing a piccolo. American and French soldiers; girls, women, old men and children were gathered there. The lad was mighty clever and he had quite a repertoire. When he played "Joan of Arc," the French caught the strain from the "Marseillaise," and as soon as he had finished they clamored for the real piece. He rendered that stirring battle-cry with a great deal of spirit and carried them right with him.

Brooks sends me a note from B——[8], by motorcycle despatch rider, that he will send down some reading matter. which will surely be welcome. We wander about the streets every evening, hating ourselves. Not a thing to do.

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(Letter) Somewhere in France,
August 16th, 1918.

We dined out lawst evening—oh, yaas. It was my first meal in a French restaurant, for the reason that we have only just received our first pay since our May pay. It was a dingy little place, with two long tables, like all the provincial cafes, one on each side of the room. On one side of the table the customers sit on a bench; on the other, chairs are provided. The "linen" was pure (?) white—oil-cloth. The waiter was a pleasant lad of 13 or 14 years of age, meriting the name "Garçon," either by trade or age. We had three small steaks, a four-egg omelet, French-fried potatoes, salad, a beer for Lowry, and tea, served in a glass, for me. They had some passable cheap cigars hidden away, and Lowry and I persuaded them to part with five for each of us. The whole thing only cost us 12 francs, or about 70 to 75 cents each. The cooking was excellent, and was all done by the proprietress, a widow, over a one-burner stove.

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(Letter) August 17th, 1918.

I essayed a French barber-shop last night. This place is on the main drag and is a "four-chair shop." But there are only two—what shall I say?—operators.

They are man and wife. The man is a typical French-

[8] Bertrichamps.

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man and barber; long pointed mustache, hair parted in middle, etc. His wife is plump, tries to speak a few English words, but can't, and dresses in the usual black. It was my lot to sit in her chair and Lowry in her husband's. These chairs are cane-seated affairs, with a pretence of a movable back.

Well, the Madame shaved me — and I mean it — she SHAVED me. Cold water. And a corn-razor. Every stroke of that implement was an agony. I lost all my belief in the sincerity of the Franco-American alliance. I do not think we can trust this nation so long as such women live within its borders. If this is the treatment they accord their Allies, were I a German prisoner, I'd—grow a beard.

However, I was favored; most of the customers had to get up and wash the lather off their faces themselves in a bowl on the shelf below the long plate mirror; but, perhaps from remorse, she took an old sponge (like we used to spit on and wipe slates with) and wiped off my face. Perhaps she thought that I was too weak to rise. Then she gave my mouth, eyes and hair a thorough spray with some sort of scale-remover (possibly Paris-green), and finished up with powder, applied with a dauber, like ladies use. I requested a hair-cut, but it seemed she had nothing in stock in that line. Either the firm possessed only one pair of shears or the Madame never got her diploma from Barber College; in any event, I had to get out of the chair and wait till the boss finished cutting Lowry's hair. When he had cut my hair and trimmed my mustache (begging to be allowed to wax and twist the ends), I asked for a shampoo. No, no; I was in wrong again. He must have skipped that grade at the College. That was woman's sphere. So I waited till she sacrificed another innocent to appease the wrath of the gods, and got back in her chair. I ordered a shampoo; she started to lather my chin. In purest Parisian, I explained that I did not want my chin shampooed. Then she picked up a sort of silver-plated percolator which I had been eyeing with wonder for some time, and carried it to the kitchen. My head was rubbed with soft soap, then she returned with the percolator, steaming hot, and poured the coffee or tea, or whatever was

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its contents, over my head as a rinse. . . All this entertainment cost me only two francs, or about 35 cents.

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(Letter) (Rambervillers), Aug 17, 1918.

We went to the Cinema night before last. You know the European idea of theaters is the reverse from ours; the bon-ton and the élitè go up in "nigger-heaven" and look down in scorn upon the proletariat in the "pit."

The Parterre (down front) was 60 centimes; the Parquet (back) 1 franc, and the gallery 1½ francs.

The place was crowded and without visible, or sensible, means of ventilation. Most of the men retained their hats or caps. The French, in the main, smoked their vile cigarettes, tho a few puffed on abominable cigars. The Yanks sent up smoke-screens of Camouflage Tobacco (Bull.)

Films were cloudy and vague. Scenarios rather clever; acting very fair. Of course, this is only a provincial town, but I am inclined to think the French are years behind America in moving pictures.

The old grandmother where we are billeted is a jolly sort. We have lots of fun talking to her. About all Lowry can say is "Par bun" (pas bon); "promenade"; "Boche": "Bon sewer" (bon soir) and "Oui." And the Madame cannot speak one word of English, but she loves American boys and likes to talk to us. Lowry will use one or two French words in a long sentence in English, expecting her to understand. If he ends with an upward inflection of his voice, she will answer, "Oui, oui, oui; ah oui, oui, oui." She gave one son to La Patrie.

The other day she had just bought a rabbit as we came in. She was standing in the driveway to the stable below our loft. The salesman had frugally taken the skin off the rabbit before he handed it to her. The entrails were left on the ground. There they still lie, unless some scavenger dog or cat has cleaned them up. In every way, it was typical of life in a provincial French town.

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(Diary) Tuesday, Aug. 20.

While Lowry and I were conversing with a young girl, her brother, mother and several neighbors, with assorted children, some Boche planes came over. Heavy anti-airplane shooting. In the midst of the entertainment Jerry dropped a gigantic flare, lighting up the entire town as brilliantly as a corner arc-light. The whole crew were seized with consternation and ran precipitately for their little cave, leaving L. and I stark alone and somewhat disconcerted. Not knowing whither to flee, we stood our ground resolutely, to set the French an example. Nothing followed this flare (except, possibly, a photograph) and soon the flock came trooping back, laughing shame-facedly. The Madame, in her haste, had tripped and fallen headlong. . . . .

About the time when we had gone to sleep in our billet, heard heavy explosions. Aerial bombs were being dropped near the city. The explosions rocked the solid old stone barn. We three went out into the street to observe, but could see nothing except the criss-crossing white beams from searchlights.

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(Letter) France, Aug. 20, 1918.

Quit work early this morning and went to the French Barracks for a bath. We are permitted to use it from 8 to 11 Tuesdays and Fridays. This was a permanent, peace-time garrison, and it certainly is fine. The showers are walled with white tile, and floored with colored mosaics. Each shower is walled off, with a tiny room next it for dressing.

Met a fine-looking and apparently very intelligent Private in the French Army. He lived in New York city, although of French blood, until he joined the Tricolor, two and a half years ago. His English is as pure and free from accent as mine. He told us of one regiment which had won a glorious reputation. Many of its members had personal decorations, while the whole unit wore three fourrageurs (shoulder-cords); for the Medaille Militaire; the Croix de Guerre; and the Legion d'Honneur. In a certain campaign, the army was retreating and in imminent danger. The Com-

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manding General called the Colonel of this regiment and told him that his men had been picked to defend a certain position, to allow the balance time to safely withdraw. . . The Colonel assembled his men and said to them: "Men of the ——th Regiment, a great honor has been bestowed upon us; greater than any which our country has yet given to us. We have been picked from the entire Army—to save it. We have been chosen to die, that others may live to carry on the battle against the enemy." * * * And they did die, every heroic man of them, from the newest recruit to the Colonel himself; accomplishing their splendid task in their death.

Such are the French, whom we despised before the war as effeminate, corset-wearing fashion plates! They are real men.[9]

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(Diary) Thursday, 22nd.

Regular evening airplane alarms. Two killed and nine injured in barracks at Baccarat. No bombs dropped here.

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(Letter) 22 August, 1918.

Did you realize how extensive was the use of sabots here? I had thot them out of date, but they are almost universally worn, at least for hard labor and bad weather.

No, I am glad to say I've not yet seen any mutilated French or Belgian children. Some of the boys claimed they have. I have, however, seen lots of orphans. One would never know them to be orphans; they enter other French families, and until one makes the usual inquiries, one would think them part of the circle. Then it is discovered that, simply, the father was killed by the Boches and the mother is working to support herself; or, perhaps, both have been killed.

It is remarkable how beautiful the average French child is; seldom does one see an ill-favored or stupid-looking one.

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9Note: Half a page deleted by Capt. Ch———, Censor. If I remember correctly, it concerned the fact that the French had no love to lose for the English, but were learning day by day, to respect and like the Yanks.

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I only wish they could be furnished more soap and handkerchiefs—and some Yankee lessons in their respective uses. The group which surrounds us when we wash at our horse-trough will beg or steal bits of soap; and find great delight in playing with it; but never, by any chance will they USE it. They are happy little rascals and very lovable, except some of the street gamins whom the generosity of the U. S. soldiers has spoiled. They surround one, insistently demanding "Souvenirs" and "Tabac." Six to ten years is not unusually young for the boys to smoke. I have seen a four-year-old try to roll a cigarette.

You should see the French gardens. Marvels of compactness and intensive cultivation; and flowers are not forgotten. The artistic-souled French could never commit such an atrocity as was done in some American town, where a beautiful lawn about some state capitol was torn up—and potatoes planted. Think of a thing like that, with America's millions of acres of idle ground! It is our mania for the spectacular; the thing which gets publicity * * * I have seen many fruit trees here, forced to grow absolutely flat, like a vine, against a wall; their limbs stretched out like a person crucified but willingly bearing their fruit in a space, which, to our eyes, simply doesn't exist.

Am sending a photo of self with Lowry and Green. The camera which took it fell 10 feet when the shop was bombarded in '14; but it is still shooting.

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(Letter) (Written at Foyer du Soldat),
22ieme Aout, 1918.

The atrocious morning-glory-horn phonograph is grating out its strident tunes, especially the naughty one, wherein a woman protests, giggles and screams. I am sorry I cannot understand the words.

Blessés from the local hospital—all men who have killed their Boche, no doubt—are here quietly reading. There are two at my table. I note they are both reading serious magazines—French reviews. Some are sipping the bitter "coffee," which is the only article sold here. One trio is

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playing cards with the French 32-card deck. Now one of our boys tackles the piano. A little pep and jazz. The poilus enjoy our fun.

God grant our arms continued success. Every Hun killed brings me nearer home. Do you wonder I am bloodthirsty? Horrible old world, isn't it? All our happiness is purchased with some one's else misery, if you analyze it.

(Now, a Frenchman is singing, in three-quarter English, "Keep the Home Fires Burning," while Gardner Lawrence, of Toledo, accompanies him on the piano.)

The M. P's have had a shake-up. Capt. Van is to be sent to the Infantry. His first and second lieutenants were packed off home as surplus weight. Uneasy lies the head that wears a bar. I be only a Cor-prill, by heck, but I must be a gosh-darn good one, fer they ain't sent ME home yit; no, ner ain't goin' to, nuther. Lt. Grannan is acting C. C. of "B" Co. Rieck will exchange his brass bar for a tin one soon. Captain A—— holds on. Brooks dreams of a tiny golden bar. He deserves it.

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(Letter) 24th August, 1918.

A rainy evening. I am sitting in my favorite, the "Restaurant Aubry," writing on a yellowed-white oil cloth, sticky with mementos of long-digested meals and forgotten drinks. (The dirty spot on my paper here is a cat-track. The kittens are allowed on the tables only between meals; this rule is strictly enforced.)

I am drinking an excellent glass (not cup) of tea. This costs 6 sous, with one or two for my friend Marcel, the young boy who is host and waiter—a charming lad, but one with a bad memory for orders, when several Americans try to rush him. I have fallen into the habit of dropping in here of an evening for tea, as others do for beer and wine.

I am mighty lonesome for the boys of "A" Company.

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(Letter) The SAME-WHERE in France,
24th August, 1918.

Yesterday was really hot and brought the first storm in three weeks. It was a very mild, well-mannered affair; a conventional amount of lightning, not too frequently obtruding, occasional well-bred murmurs of thunder, and followed by a delicate rain.

Every house here has cats. They are a bit shy of us, but "compree" American petting very well. Dogs, especially smaller breeds, are quite popular. Among other household pets are horses, cows and goats.

When I get home it will be necessary to have the garage remodelled. Put in about two centuries of various sorts of dirt; build me a wooden bunk in one corner; reduce the size of the window, buy a horse, two cows, three goats and four roosters and put them in; get some second-hand straw and a blanket, and I will be able to sleep soundly and well.

If possible to procure one of those theatrical thunder-makers to imitate the soothing effect of artillery fire, it certainly would be a luxury. I would also like a sort of trough rigged up for my washing and shaving. Then, if you would let me line up at the kitchen with my mess kit—no, no, that is too much. I cannot ask you to imitate army chow, no matter how much my mouth will water for a nice greasy, half-raw chunk of sow-belly bacon, some half-cooked rice, or Blue Vitriol Coffee.

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(Letter) Dimanche matin, neuf heures,
25 August, 1918.

There is a simple-minded Jew here, exulting in the cognomen of Abraham Goldberger, one of the members of the Labor Company, detailed to clean up our offices, act as K. P., etc. He sleeps alongside two clerks, in the front half of our billet. These two are in the habit of returning at night somewhat exhilarated by vin blanc and vin rouge, and then lecturing this poor Hebrew. Goodness knows he is a fit subject for many lectures on "Personal Hygiene and

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General Deportment." He has a terrible snore and they spare not their hobnails or any other objects which come to hand, to wake him and tell him to quit. Night before last we made a unanimous decision and ordered him to get a bath before last night. He admits not having had one since coming here (three and one-half weeks), and Lord only knows how many years before that. Sleeps with all his clothing on, except one shoe, as that hurts his foot.

We waited for him last night and when he came demanded if he had taken the bath. "Sure." "Where?" "In de creek." "What creek?" He couldn't tell us. Finally he admitted he had not taken a bath but had "washed his feet." Altho a step in the right direction, this, even if true, did not satisfy us, and we told him to prepare to take a bath right away. He got scared, grabbed his rifle and swung it about. I ordered him to put it down and he finally obeyed. Then we talked some more; told him we weren't going to hurt him, but that he must clean up. He was frightened, however, and soon he seized his gun again and started wildly to talk of killing us all. I took it from him and we all started to remove his clothes. One touch was enough. He began to beller like a baby (27 years old, physically). When he got this out of his system he became, by some psychological miracle, quite reasonable. He undressed himself. I never saw such filth. His gray sox were, actually. black. And his "washed" feet—whew!

Then dressed ourselves only in union suits, with myself as candle-bearer, we escorted him down to the horse-trough, where we gravely superintended his ablutions. Believe me, that fellow did give himself a real bath. We did not touch him, but he used lots of soap and plenty of that icy, mountain-spring water, then followed with a healthy rub and we hustled him back to bed. Ordered him to take at least two baths a week and wash some clothes, on pain of repetition.

The old madame, good enough to be anybody's grandmother, came up this morning. I knew she wanted to know the cause of the racket so I explained to her. She laughed delightedly, and told me, then, that she had witnessed the midnight bath from her window. I guess most of the neigh-

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borhood watched that strange, taper-lit performance. Well, we had a lot of fun and did the poor kike a good turn; likewise the American Army.

Time hung heavy on our hands in Rambervillers and anything was welcomed to relieve the tedium. The **Hornet** and the **Rambler**, rival papers, were written, and "published" on the Bulletin Board in the lower hall of the old school building. Soon the **Buzz-Saw** entered the arena and forced them to the wall. None of the three journals lived to see Vol. I, No. 2 at its head. The crowds about the board became so great, especially during working hours, and the items so frank, that hints from Above led us all to discontinue.

My partner in the **Buzz-Saw** was a Sanitary Train man; in civilian life a reporter for a Cincinnati paper; and one of the finest men I met in service.

The **Buzz-Saw** was a sheet 8½ x 11, typewritten on both sides. The pages printed herewith contain about half of the original contents.

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# THE BUZZ-SAW

Vol I. No. 1. Rambervillers, France. August, 1918.

## SLOPPY SCANDAL.

### Rotten Rough House at the Johanny Café.

Strict censorship prevents our obtaining a complete report, but the Buzz-Saw is able to state that "Police Headquarters" was raided at a late hour last night (8:30 p. m.) and a terrible condition exposed.

Several prominent men were implicated. Charges of drunkenness, near drunkenness and beer-drunkenness were placed. A card game with stakes running into hundreds of centimes was raided, with all on deck.

Several miscreants charged with Attempted Drunkenness were released.

Authorities are evidently shielding friends, for they refuse to divulge information. A visit to the Town Mayor proved fruitless.

### Big Prune.

The lovely Petite Brunette who used to smile at us from her nearby fenêtre, is no longer visible.

A certain NCO claims she is obeying his orders. This fellow betroys a disgusting lack of esprit de corps and, tho, his efficiency is unquestioned, his selfish policy is reprehensible in the extreme.

M'lle. Suzanne says that "M. P." on a soldier's arm stands for "Mademoiselle, Promenade?"

### Weather.

FOR We-Uns—Fair.
FOR The Huns—Warmer.
FOR Neutrals—Cool.

### Fast Workers.

Special to the Buzz-Saw:

R. S. M. Bergman, in charge Franco-American Union, reports that every member of the D. S. S. (Drunk, Staggering Stratocrats) has now procured a Mademoiselle for evening promenades with the exception of Sergeant Kepler, of the San. Train. K. had one in view, but a dashing coolie laborer from the B. E. F. proved more fascinating.

### Society Notes.

Our esteemed co-worker, M. Abraham Goldberger, of the Labor Co., is taking the baths at a popular French watering place.

### Yea, Bo!

The tri-daily Mess Ceremony is still being conducted in strict accord with the Ritual of the Ancient Accursed Order of Belly-Robbers.

We eat at the restaurants.

No wonder the French call non-coms "Sous-Officiers"!!

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## EDITORIALS.

### The Buzz-Saw Demands Your Attention.

In our title lies our mission. We enter the journalistic field of this burg without fear or fee. We seek no favors. We scorn opposition.

Our prime purpose is to flay the futile fledglings now posing as genuine Journals, under the aliases of **Hornet** and **Rambler**. "Hornet" is right! And "Rambler" distinctly so!

In this undertaking we are prompted by professional pride, as well as by motives of patriotism. In the latter connection we feel it is our duty to acquaint the reading public with the fact that the first of these so-called newspapers is owned and controlled by enemy sources and owes its editorial existence to pumpernickel and beer furnished by the German Government. As for the second, it originated in an environment of milk and honey and has ever professed a pernicious policy wherein pusillanimous pacificism is the principle that most prominently prevails.

We know whereof we chatter. We have known the editor of the **Hornet** since he was a dirty-faced little pig, living on sauerkraut and swill in the Mohawk mires of Cincinnati.

We can remember when the editor of the **Rambler** wore curls and tripped daintily down Euclid Avenue every Saturday afternoon to taks his music lesson, all dolled up in his velvet Lord Fauntleroys.

And these birds would mould public sentiment! Bah!

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### Shome Shootin' Shergunt!

A sergeant of the D. S. S. (Dugout Seeking Soldiers) returning from a Conference at "Police Hq.," opened the fall hunting season. He flushed a gargoyle on the old church but failed to bag his quarry. Better luck next time.

### BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

BORN — To Mme. Nancy Goat, No. 11 Rue de Buerre (Butter), three kids, undressed. All doing well.

DIED—One Swiss Fromage at Billet 13, Faubourg St. Die.

### A Tip.

A certain lanky sergeant of the Signal Corps had better quit hanging around the butcher shop. Pop was grinding his cutlery this morning.

### National Guard Stuff.

The D. S. S. (Daring Secure Scribes) are surely upholding the rep of the O. N. G. as "Feather-Bed Soldiers."

99 44/100 per cent are hitting the feathers in rented rooms. Pretty soft.

The impure 56/100 are plucking the feathers to keep up the supply.

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(Diary) Sunday, 25th Aug.

Beautiful summer day. Walked out in the country and laid in the shade, near a pretty stream, reading La Vie Parisienne. This war is terrible!

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(Letter) Monday, 26 August, 1918.

Mention of Roosevelt reminds me of ads. posted all about. At Nancy a beer is brewed under the name of "Teddy," and advertised by flaming posters of an American soldier, with the Stars and Stripes. * * * Altho France adores President Wilson, the French love T. R., who appeals to their sense of humor and their admiration for the audacious.

Yesterday I saw something, or rather somebody, whom I never expected to see. He stepped right out of the musty pages of history, did this real, live Town Crier. Came to my ears the rolling of a drum. Then I saw him, wearing a dark blue uniform, long frocked, with loose, baggy trousers. After the rattle of his drum had secured attention, he read off some announcement in a clear but rather sing-songy voice. Then he walked on, to repeat the drumming and crying at frequent pauses.

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## ORDERING A MEAL.

Scene: Anywhere in France.

Time: World War.

Dramatis Personnae: Willing Waiter and Hungry Yank, who thinks he can parler Francais.

W. W. "Voila. Bon jour, Monsieur. Good-bye Americaine."

H. Y. "Oui, oui. Bum sewer—no, I mean Bum jure, mon sewer. Where do you get that 'Good-bye' stuff? I just came. Compree?"

W. W. (shrugging shoulders) "Ah, oui, comprit. Que voulez vous m'sieur?"

H. Y. "Juh vux 4—compree; 1, 2, 3, 4 (on fingers) eggs. You know, eggs, EGGS. EGGS from a hen, chicken—compree du lay, du lay."

W. W. "Ah, oui, M'sieur desire une verre du lait. Mais ce n'est pas possible. Du lait 'fini'. Pas du lait. Biere? Vin? Cafe?"

H. Y. "Oui, beer and van. And some beans—compree beans? Combeens. Oui?"

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W. W. "Combien pour la biere? Onze sous, M'sieur."

H. Y. "Never mind the price, old boy; I'm here to eat. Donney muh some French-fried potatoes—peutetres—voo compree?"

W. W. (in distraction) "Peutetre, peutetre quel, m'sieur? Je ne sais pas qu'est ce c'est que vous voulez."

H. Y. "Don't argue, buddy. Pas parlay. Bring mwa 12 (on fingers) rolls; compree rolls—bonnes?"

W. W. "Des bonnes du quel, m'sieur?"

H. Y. "Any kind of buns will do. Ce nuh ferry-Anne. Ah, We, juh vux aussi wheat-cakes—compree?"

W. W. "Huit de quel, monsieur?"

H. Y. "What's this duck-hell you talk about all the time? Don't try to kid me, Froggy. I'm not ordering any canvas-back, understand. Pas de duck. But bring me ung pew de pan."

W. W. "Qu'est que c'est? Ah, oui, oui, oui. Je comprends. Un peu du pain. Avez-vous une carte, m'sieur?"

H. Y. "A cart? Say bo, I'm not ordering mess for the company; just for myself. Mwa. soul. Pas toot. Poor muh."

W. W. "Non, non, monsieur, vous ne me comprenez pas. Il faut d'avoir une carte du pain. Necessaire. Comme ca." (showing him a bread card.)

H. Y. "No, not that; I don't want a Railroad sandwich—two white tickets with a red one between. Real bread. Pan, Pane, Des pan."

W. W. (in despair) "Alors, monsieur, attendez une minute."

The Weary Waiter disappears, to return in an hour and a half, with french-fried potatoes, beefsteak, omelet and coffee, which is all there was in the kitchen, anyway.

The Hungry Yank eats, satisfied with his French and his meal.

---

(Letter) 26th August, 1918.

Had quite a party at the Foyer du Soldat last night. First, four ladies gave a piano quartette selection, with two pianos. Excellent. Then a comical, middle-aged Frenchman sang some songs, apparently funny. We enjoyed his gestures. Then a cute boy of about nine recited some pieces. A born actor. Had several encores. The next, a French sergeant, was missing, having unexpectedly been sent to the front. One of our fellows imitated a ballyhoo artist for a side show. Following this a Frenchman sang some serious songs, in a splendid voice.

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The next act was given by three of our boys, in song and dance. One, in blackface, with a Central American uniform, gold helmet, etc., made a big hit. Another Froggie, this time with a guitar; a recitation by one of our men, "Invictus," and more French songs, led up to the (hot) climacteric finale, a real Alabam' shimmy dancer.

The place was overcrowded with convalescent French troops, including black colonials, English aviators, Americans hiking across country, including a few negroes, and our Stat. Section. I suppose the American acts were "all Iroquois to them" as their French phrase runs, but they appreciated it all.

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(Diary) Monday, 26 August.

Played checkers at FdS with a French soldier. Beat me three times at his own game, and then two of three games with American rules. Beginning to pity Ludendorff.

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(Letter) 27th August, 1918.

Do you remember that Miss ———, whom I met at a summer resort one time? Can you recall her Christian name? I have been trying to do so.

I knew the young woman's first name perfectly; and knew they did at home. It was "Lorraine"; and in this way I let them know the general district I was in. The clever censor, Capt. Ch——, of course, passed that as innocent; it was not the only bit of fun I had with him.

(Letter) Tuesday, 27th August, 1918.

I read a splendid idea in the home paper today; that of planting a tree for each soldier who dies in battle, with a bronze plate carrying his name. The man or woman who conceived that idea is a true poet. How beautiful! The tree, beautifying his home community, giving shade and refreshment to the dear ones for whom he died, is a wonderful monument. And think what glorious and proud memories

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would hover around a boulevard of such trees. Bitter thoughts? Yes, at first, but as time slips a soothing hand over one's aching heart, and the sting of sorrow gradually changes into a sad, proud memory, that colonnade of green will be the most meaningful monument man could erect—because it will not be man's work alone, but Nature's, with his.

I hope these thoughts do not depress you. We must learn to look at death as do the French: When a French soldier loses a parent, sister, or civilian brother, he puts a black mourning band on the sleeve of his uniform, but if a father or brother dies in battle, he dons a tiny tricolor. Isn't the significance of that immense?

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(Letter) 30th August, 1918.

There were no papers here this morning, as The Train did not come yesterday. This cute little affair drops in about 8:30 to 10 p. m., whenever possible, and nearly the whole town turns out to meet it. When it does feel able to make the trip we can get the Paris editions of the New York Herald, Chicago Tribune, or the London Mail, of the current date.

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(Letter) 30 August, 1918.

There is always something of interest here, from the horses, which are eternally reminding me of Christmas, with their bells, to the tame pigeons in the square; or the neat little milkmaids delivering their wares from push-carts.

Came across a full-page picture, in a French magazine, of several Yanks, in a French village, talking to a young boy and a happy-looking granddad. It was very typical. Under it was the following: "In our villages where they are billeted, the Americans are the friends of everyone. The good nature of these big children ("grand enfants"); their helpfulness; their practical spirit, as well as their sincere desire to assimilate our ideas and customs, have made them

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pleasant guests for our peasants." I thought it a very nice little tribute; and very true.[10]

---

(Diary) Friday, Aug. 30, 1918.

About 11 p. m. an English plane fell, two kilo's away. With five men it had been on a successful bombing raid into Germany. On the return they were attacked by a German plane. A fierce battle ensued. The pilot was shot thru the eye but continued to fly his plane. At length he arrived over his field. The guiding lights were lit for his descent. But he was blinded, or else so nearly unconscious that he did not see them. He flew away again. Tried to land near this town. Instead of reaching a field on either side of a road, the plane struck a tree bordering the road, and plunged down. He was killed. Observer, who had lost a leg previously, and carried on with a cork substitute, also killed. One other died this morning. The tree which the machine hit was stripped of its limbs and torn up by the roots.

---

(Letter) Labor Day (2 Sept.), 1918.

Was excused from regular Sunday morning work yesterday and attended 10 o'clock Mass in the ancient church of this town. When I entered my first thought was that an Admiral of the French Navy was the guest of honor. He was attired in a dark blue uniform, with frock coat. About his right shoulder hung a sort of sash of light blue, embroidered with silver; this widened and met another, from under his left arm, in the back; and a beautiful sword was hung in the pocket thus formed. He wore Napoleon's old hat, which seemed pretty good yet. These French as so thrifty.

When I first saw him, he was trying, in a dignified manner, to capture a mischievious fox-terrier. Of course, he failed; so he turned to a lad of 10 or 12 years nearby and spoke a few words of quiet reproof for introducing the animal in the holy place. The boy looked him innocently in the eye and swore he did not even know the canine to speak to.

I walked down the aisle and took a seat. I did not make

[10]This picture was reproduced in the American Legion Weekly, June 19, 1920.

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the genuflection on entering the pew, the cross, nor kneel and pray. As I did not know the ritual, I decided to act naturally and reverently, in my own way.

It is most difficult to realize the age of things European. The flagging of the main aisle was literally worn hollow, by centuries of worshippers; and the stone pillars bordering this aisle are much older than our nation.

Along the walls were reliefs of Christ crucified, of Jeanne d'Arc, etc.; also a series, apparently in wood, of colored bas-reliefs of incidents in the Passion. The windows were very good, altho disfigured by many missing panes: this done, I presume, in 1914.

After the mass had been sung, or whatever it was, the priest took up his position in the pulpit, a third of the way from the altar, at one side. The Admiral brought him a book, out of which he read the announcements for the ensuing week. He then delivered a sermon, in French, in a style which I liked—easy, pleasant, yet not without vigor, however. But my French fell down completely, and I could not even get the drift.

Following the sermon, the congregation sang a very musical affair; the Admiral walking along the aisles, backward, bearing a huge battle-axe. At every second or third pew he would stop, dropping his deadly weapon upon the floor with a most emphatic clatter. Behind him came a young lady with a collection-basket; and I can assure you that after a glance at his mediaeval weapon, no one dared ignore the basket. In case the battle-axe failed to produce the desired effect, he carried in his left hand an immense baton, similar to that used by band-leaders, and embellished with silver.

I notice that that (word "imbecile" deleted) Gov. C—— is going to have "'Taps' sounded from the state-house at the same hour as it is sounded in France."

(1) Taps is not sounded here, at least near the line, where this division is. (2) If he has it sounded at the same hour, 9:30 p. m. there, it will be about 4 a. m. with us, and we'll be about ready for Reveille—(deleted.) (3) If it were

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sounded at the same time, that would be about 2 or 3 in the afternoon, Columbus time. But I suppose it's good publicity for him.

Also saw some dope about how "dry" France was. Please understand these European people consider wine and beer as we do ginger-ale and cocoa-cola. They refer to the prohibition of cognac, absinthe, whiskey, etc. And they are not unprocurable. I will have lots more to tell you when I come home—(deleted)—

---

(Letter) 4th Sept., 1918.

Moved my bed, upon the insistence of the old Madame, to a corner where, she explained, I would be out of the draft. She hung a straw curtain over the slat-partition. This curtain I have covered with pictures from La Vie Parisienne. etc. With my belongings hung on nails, and candles stuck on projecting stones of the outer wall, I tell you I have a real home here. I sleep on a feather-bed which the old lady rented at an infinitesimal price. Pretty soft.

The cafes and restaurants here are only open from 6 to 9 a. m., from 10:30 a. m. to 1 p. m., and 5:30 p. m. to 9 p. m.; but a lot can be accomplished in that time. These people have such different ideas on the subject of drink from ours. I have frequently seen family parties in these resturants, with tiny children who had each a big tumbler of sweet wine before them, just like their elders. There is not the alliance between saloon-keepers and the underworld which holds in America. Motherly women, of good character, preside at these places; and seldom see anything indecorous—from their own people, who really know Temperance.

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(Letter) 6 Sept., 1918.

Was in a barber-shop recently, when a Chinois coolie came in. Wanted to buy a box he saw in the window. The barber's wife opened it, disclosing rice-powder and a dainty-puff. She showed him how to use the latter and he bought it with delight. Then wanted to buy a quart bottle of toilet-

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water, which they would not sell. He bought an ordinary-size affair, and then some fancy soap. In all, he spent 10 francs; and his total WAGE is ONE franc a day.

Surprised to hear G——'s husband was allowed to send home a pair of wooden shoes.[11]

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(Diary) Sat., 7 Sept.

Stat. Sec. being reduced. I am relieved and go back to Co. Green, who is a professional stenographer, remains here. Glad to get back to real work.

---

(Letter) Mon., 9th Sept.

Truck to carry me back to company came this afternoon, but the official order had not been written; so I unloaded and got out.

Went to Mass again yesterday morninig. My friend, The Admiral, wore a brilliant scarlet uniform, but along the same general lines—those of a bed-sheet in a wind. In the afternoon Lowry, Green and I went walking in the beautiful Bois near here. We got caught in showers but put some leafy branches in some low trees, making a successful abris. In the evening we planned again to go to the town Cinema, but due to the rain, the town was out of juice, again. The local electrical current always fails during a rain-storm.

Said good-bye to Mme. Freard, my good old landlady. After settling a little money I owed her, I gave her a tiny knife, as an American souvenir. Last night she got out a box full of "Souvenirs Americains" to show us—stuff previous Yanks had given her. To-wit:

Item; 1 souvenir jug (broken) from Battersea, England;
Item: 1 box "Americain" safety-matches (made in Sweden);
Item; 1 real American flashlight (broken);
Item; 1 badge from cap of woman street-car conductor of Manchester, England.
Item; 1 nickeled Anchor (yes; broken);
Item; 1 French tri-colored buttonhole rosette; and
Item: 1 deck American playing cards.

We did not disillusion the old girl; she treasured them

11Comment "He must be an officer" deleted.

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so. Told me if I ever came back, there'd always be a bed for me.

---

(Diary) Wed., Sept. 11, 1918.

Capt. Ch— neglected to get me transportation yesterday. Today I got myself a truck (unofficially) and went to B——.[12] Glad to see boys. Lots of work accumulated.

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(Letter) (Written at Baccarat), Sept. 11th.

Last evening in R——[13] was spent with Green, in our favorite "Café des (——)[14]. I sipped my limonade while Bill drank his vin rouge as he told me how he and other rabid Prohibitionists broke up a "wet" speech in West Virginia. C'est drole, ça.

I surely am tickled to get back with the old company. I feel as if I had just re-enlisted. Now that I have left the Statistical Section, your Service Flag can fly again. We are quartered in permanent barracks, not the old glass-factory.

---

(Letter) 11 Sept., 1918.

They are telling a good one on Sgt. Curtis of our company—a dour Scot, ex-gob and hard-boy, who was walking down a certain road paralleling the front. This road leads to a certain village which is in No-Man's-Land. On one side stretch our lines; on the other, Fritzie's; while the village, its homes full of furniture and its stores full of goods, lies, deserted, between.

As the Sergeant neared the line, a Yank yelled at him, "Where the H—— are you goin'? You'll be picked off by snipers."

Replied the Sarge, with assurance, "Can't you see my M. P. arm-band? They won't dare shoot an M. P. It's their finish if they do." (Only he didn't use the word "finish"). Then he walked right into this abandoned town and out again, unscathed.

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12Baccarat.
13Rambervillers.
14Vosges.

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(Diary) Fri., Sept. 13.

Wilbur Harry, our handsome women-crazy bugler, took me on a tour of the town in evening. He bade good-bye to all the bar-maids, kissing those whom he dared; i. e., most of them.

---

(Diary) Sat., Sept. 14.

Weather clearing, after four or five days rain. Siren sounded for Boche plane in afternoon. Again, about 9 p. m., he dropped two little ones rather near.

---

(Letter) (Written at Rambervillers.)
Monday, 16th September.

Here I am again, in the F. d. S., in the town where I was with the Statistical Section. It seems like home again, after having lived here five weeks.

Worked hard yesterday morning. Capt. A—— o.k'd Sgt. Brook's permission for me to precede the company to this town. Made up my roll and had it fastened on my newly-issued O. D. bicycle before I had leave. On the handle-bars I carried a few things, wrapped in my rain-coat. Fastened to my right shoulder-strap was my helmet. On my left side hung my gas-mask; carried by the sling, my rifle was on my back. My big pack was fastened above the rear wheel. Automatic, ammunition and canteen hung from my belt.

The town[15] lies in a hollow, and there were steep hills to mount, on leaving. In a half-hour, I had gone less than two kilo's (1¼ miles). Was sweating and panting. Laid down four or five minutes, and continued. Soon hit the level; and after that, descending slopes. That was fine, except coaster-brake would not work. . . . . I stopped at 12, with two doughboys, who had dropped out on their hike. As a matter of course, they shared their tin-willy and hard-bread with me.

Met Corp. Green. He and Lowry have moved, having rented a room of some very nice people. . . . Walked in the Bois all afternoon. The weather is glorious—clear, sunny

15 Baccarat.

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and warm. (Diary: Spent afternoon in woods—Foret du Romont. Airplane battle overhead. Civilians terror-stricken. Two Fritzies shot down nearby.)

(Letter continued.) Treated Green to a supper at the Aubry, as he was broke. Place crowded, owing to troop movement. Others were told that there was no more food, but for old friends like us, Mme. A. and my good friend Marcel brought forth some delicious beefsteak, usual f. f. potatoes, bread, eggs, etc. Got some bottled pink Limonade. Broke last 50-franc note.

Then looked up my old landlady, Mme. Freard, who was tickled to death, and "ooh-la-la"d all over and laughed her old, cackly laugh, and kissed me. Made me come in the one room where she and her old husband eat and sleep. Wanted to give me red wine. . . . . Our old billet is crammed with doughboys, but she has another little room she will fix up for me.

Then I returned to Green's new home. Found him and Lowry, instead of in their third floor cubby-hole, on the second floor, in their host's parlor. I met the father, a precise, well-dressed gentleman—an insurance agent. His wife is forty-odd, plump, charming and very good-looking. They have two daughters, 18 and 21, who are quite pretty (rather a Germanic type). They have studied music in Germany and speak the language fluently. Here is a sample of their newest tongue, one said to me, "We know only one Americain soldat well. She speak French." They know all our new American popular music; in fact had been playing before I arrived. They apologized for not playing more, on account of their shortage of petrol for the lamp.

I arrived about 8:30. A 9, Papa made a little speech about his regular bed-time, and retired. Soon they served us some home-made pastry, covered with sugar, and teeny-tiny glasses of what I suppose was an excellent wine. Doggone it, this is a hard country for a Prohibitionist. Hate to offend them; but so far I am still flying the dust-colored flag, camel rampant—without any stars or bars. Left at 9:30.

My feather-bed at Freard's took up half my room; the balance is filled with junk. They must have had a some-

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what better home at one time. Little statuettes of the Christ, Joseph and Mary, etc., abounded. Pictures likewise. There was one quaint picture of Louis XVI, surrounded by cherubim, with a text about his "ascending to Heaven." There were two hand-made cages, with a canary in each. And what else I know not. But my bed, which came right up around me in loving embrace, was a darb.

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(Letter) (Written at Robert Espagne, Meuse.)
Wed., 18 Sept., 1918.

Always on the move, especially in the last four days. Sunday I rode my wheel to R——[16] as my letter of the 16th tells.

After finishing that letter, I was planning to go out to the nearby Aviation field[17a] to see if I could not get a free ride, when one of our detail on duty here saw me and told me Capt. A—— had ordered my return to B——[17]. So I reported to Lt. Cook, our latest attached second-louie, at his detachment headquarters, the town Mairie. He told me he wanted me to take four prisoners back to the guard-house (in B——[17]). Waited for the truck he was going to get me, for two hours; then got impatient and got myself a truck. Loaded the four prisoners in the front and sat on the end-gate, with a pistol belonging to a Sergeant, who had had "de trop de vin" the night before. One of the men had twice escaped and I watched him pretty closely.

Leaned out over the end-gate, looking up at an exciting air-drama, and watching the prisoners with the tail of my eye. A Jerry had come over, doubtless for information as to the troop movement, or for photography. Allied guns were spotting all about him, like those batteries firing at Gen. Tennyson's Light Brigade, but he escaped.

Got a receipt for men from Corp. Alley and reported to Brooks. He said the Captain wanted me to report "with all my equipment"—as the company was to entrain in the morning (at B——[17], instead of R——[16], as at first given out). Cook

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16Rambervillers.
17Baccarat.
17aHqrs. for British bombing planes.

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had not told me that. My wheel was in a repair-shop, and Mme. Freard was washing my clothes, back in R——[16]. Well, ate a mess of excellent steak, f. f. potatoes and lemonade—our boys had apparently been feeding like officers while I had been away. Then started to walk back to the other town[16], fifteen kilo's away. Was picked up by a truck, as I had figured, reaching there at 5:30. The madamoiselle at the repair-shop had not fixed my bike; said it was "impossible; trop difficile." I gathered that she and her mother tried to do the work ,as I saw no men there.

Hustled to Faubourg St. Die, rolled up stuff while the old lady ironed my wash, packed it, gave her some money and rode off. Said good-bye to Green.

Luckily a truck-driver picked me up, wheel and all, and I rode back with ease. It was a wonderful trip, just at the sunset hour, thru that glorious country of rich valleys and wooded hills.[18]

Loaded field desk, bicycle, etc., on a flat-car yesterday (Tuesday) morning and about 11 we started off. Pvt. Earl Baker, Sgt. Parr's assistant, sat with me, on the seat of our company wagon, which was blocked to the flat-car. It beat a chair-car. Frequent rains necessitated our rigging up a canopy of tarpaulin, supported by two brooms, to shelter us. In this style we rode thru the little villages, arms folded across the chest, like the ladies on the elephants, in the circus parade; and, surely, we did bring smiles to the faces of the observers.

This trip gave me a better idea than I had yet had, of the charm and appeal of Europe to the tourist. Saw some wonderful bridges, chateaux, etc. A canal paralleled our line most of the way; at one point the railroad tracks and the canal were conducted over a viaduct above a river.

If you never rode thru a tunnel on a flat-car, and I assume you never did, I assure you it is an unique experience. Suddenly a hill looms ahead. You rush into a black void, all darkness before you, but the sunlit landscape still visible

16Rambervillers.
18DIARY: Air-alarm at barracks tonight. No harm done.

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behind. This latter steadily contracts in size, but does not diminish in beauty or brightness. It is fascinating to watch it grow lesser and lesser, till it is only a rose-colored lantern in the rear. Then it disappears and all is utter darkness.

The roar and rattle of the train and the feel of air rushing thru the passage are the only appeals to one's seven senses. Then, of a sudden, light dawns ahead, rapidly spreading into another round panorama of beauty, until, at length, you emerge out of the smoking tunnel into the peaceful countryside of France.[19]

Saw a prison stockade full of Huns. One guard told us there were 5,000, another 9,000; at any rate, it was packed full, and a pleasant sight to see. . . . . .

After ten hours, we detrained, 9 p. m., at M——.[20] Then we hiked to this town[21], arriving, via a rough road, little more than a goat-track, up hill and down, at 11:30; that is to say, Pvt. Kipp, the man with the company's other bicycle, and I arrived at 11:30. Waited, in this strange town, till 12:30 a. m. for the company to hike here, as we could not find out where the billets were to be. It rained. After the sweat of riding, the midnight air was penetrating, and we were more or less miserable. However, they came, and by 2 a. m. was billeted and by 2:01¼ in bed, asleep. Our billet is something like our usual second-story stable, but without the familiar fragrance from beneath. We missed it. As there was no morning mess served by our company, we slept till after 10 o'clock. . . . . .

That stuff about the number of letters you, or I, can write is all bunk. At first Lt. Grannan, who censored our mail, had an idea that we could only write six letters a week. Perhaps he invented this rule to save himself labor. In any event, is was imaginary.

I have been watching a little drama, "The Call of the Wild," out of our office window. A woman had two dogs hitched to a little cart, but one of them, spying a fox-terrier

19Passed thru Azerailles (Div. Rail-head), Luneville and Nancy.

20Mussey.

21Robert Espagne.

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across the street, slipped his collar and gave chase. His mistress displayed splendid discipline, and soon he returned in obedience to her command, with a sheepish air.

Right across the street is a horse, working a treadmill, grinding out wheat. He patiently plods, hour after hour, up the slope, never reaching the top, unable to stop; but he is uncomplaining; he simply carries on. He'd make an ideal buck private, according to some officers' ideas.

You ask me about the pretty French girls; well, I have seen some pretty ones, but, really, they do not equal the average American girl. If they are good-lookinig, they will, almost invariably, have decayed, yellow teeth and dirty finger-nails. Of course I am speaking of the peasant-type, barmaids, seamstresses, clerks, etc. The two girls I met Sunday (at R——[21a]) are the only ones of the higher class I have met. Upper bourgeoise, I suppose. This type of girl is seldom seen in public. They are guarded with an almost Spanish jealousy.

This letter, written at Robert Espagne, Sept. 18th and 19th, was locked in our field desk upon receiving rush orders to move to the front, and never censored until October 8th, after our division had helped initiate the drive in the Argonne.

From the time I returned to the company from the D. S. S., I censored all the outgoing company mail, by the Captain's orders. It was strictly against G. H. Q. orders for an enlisted man to censor mail but—**que voulez vous?** (business of shrugging shoulders.)

(Letter) (Written at Recicourt, Meuse.)
Sat., 21 Sept. 1918.

I'm writing in our new Company Headquarters, in a new town. We have a front room of a building once a store, I imagine; furnished with a grate.

Been lots doing since my last letter. We got ready in

21a Rambervillers.

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a hurry[22], and at noon started out.[23] I rode my wheel; infantry pack on carrier, with overcoat; iron rations, toilet articles and rain-coat in one blanket, on front bars; rifle, mask and helmet on shoulders. We marched a short distance out of town, down a steep, winding hill, and waited for our truck-train. I was kept very busy as a sort of liaison man, on my bicycle, up and down that hill, till we started. Finally found our trucks, waiting, of course, on another road. They were White trucks, from Cleveland, owned by the French government, and driven by silent, efficient little Indo-Chinese colonials. Fastening my bike to the tail-board with chains, I climbed on one as the long train started off; each truck keeping a prescribed distance from the others, and maintaining a certain speed.

It was a beautiful day and an enjoyable ride, livened with song and by some Kipling recited by the Captain.[24]

About sundown we detrucked[25], and then followed the usual hike thru countryside and villages. Arrived here at midnight.

We were billeted here by Captain A——, in a ruined barn, and had opened our packs preparatory to sleep, when Lt. Cook, Billeting Officer, interfered. The upshot of it was we had to re-roll our packs and hike about two miles, thru the town and way out the other side, to sleep in some dugouts. I landed in some officers' barracks, above ground, and had a little room to myself. Slept on a wire cot, with a blanket and overcoat as mattress, comforter, quilts and sheets. My rest was broken by the cold, but slept fitfully from 1:15 to 6:30.

When I got up that morning (Saturday) I found myself in a sort of swampy valley, with leafless trees rising out of oceans of sticky mud. It was cold and rainy. No food in sight. (Our kitchen? "Forty miles away," but not advancing at Sheridan's speed.) However, we discovered a shed nearby, with two men from another division. They had been left

22Friday the 20th.
23From Robert Espagne.
24Passed thru Bar-le-Duc, home of a famous jelly. Looked like Paris to us.
25At Ville.

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there with large quantities of bread and potatoes. With a small fire (against rules) I fried me some potatoes in my messkit, toasted some bread, and from my emergency supply, made myself the first cup of coffee I ever decocted—and the finest I ever drank.

No signs of our officers, who had good dugouts back in town. We played rhum all morning. At noon we got together a slum of bully beef and vegetables. . . . In the afternoon we marched back to town, where we should have been billeted. Made innumerable trips between town and these dugouts in the woods, thru the sticky-clay roads, on my bicycle, in the afternoon.

This "Deserted Village" is something new to me—a quite-sizable place, without a single civilian, or without one house untouched by the war.

"Salvaged" a dirty, but soft, pillow and a wool-lined leather vest in the "room" where I spent last night. Also found a fountain-pen lying outside the door. (Sold both latter articles. Verily, manna falls for the man trying to live on sixty francs a month.)

---

(Letter) (Written at Recicourt.)
Sunday, 22nd.

No kitchen yet. For mess tonight I brewed me a cup of tea, sans sucre, and toasted eight or nine slices of bread WITH BUTTER; so I fared pretty well. . . .

There is a large quantity of unused German rifle bullets, in clips of six, about this town. They are blunt-nosed and dented so as to spread—in fact, the infamous "dum-dum" affairs. So I know those stories to be true. . . . There is nothing they would not stoop to do.

If all our officers had been of the caliber of Colonel Hubler, who commanded the 112th Train Headquarters and Military Police for some months, there would have been less ill-feeling between commanders and men. A little incident I witnessed at Recicourt is very much to the point.

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It was in the Colonel's headquarters. Hubler was planning the traffic routes and regulations for the Argonne drive, a matter vital to the Division's success. Major C——, commanding the M. P's, Capt. A——, C. C. of Co. A and 1st Lt. Grannan, C. C. of Co. B, were present. I was there awaiting their decisions, to put the orders on paper.

The door opened and a dusty doughboy, bearing a heavy pack, entered, removed his cap, saluted, and inquired where his company could be found. He had dropped behind, which was considered a military crime.

But instead of a reprimand or a curse, Col. Hubler interrupted his important deliberations to give the soldier the information desired. This he did briefly, in a man-to-man way, without condescension. Then he resumed the conference.

Of course, this man possessed an advantage denied to many of our superiors—he was a gentleman as well as an officer.

(Letter) 23rd Sept., 1918.

A Y. M. C. A. outfit has at last arrived, with a few dozen packages of bull for sale. (We could get that free, if our brave Irish mess-sergeant and his reckless(?) crew were here.) There is not even writing paper at the Y. M.

Green and Lowry are way back in a fine little city[25a] with the Statistical Section. But I am glad to be up here where there is something to interest one, and where I can say, aprés la guerre, that I was really in it. . . . Some of our boys are up with the Infantry—ahead of the Artillery. . . . .

No, dear wife, I do not wish you to come over here in any capacity. I do not shrink from your doing your bit, but there are other things I do not like. . . . I do not care for the women Y. M. C. A. workers I have seen so far. They are all young; 25 or less, apparently. They are forbidden to speak to or associate with the "enlisted men" except on duty,

25a Bar-le-Duc.

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but have jolly times with the officers. Nor do I like the young Y. M. C. A. men; the elder men are splendid, but the kids are generally "wise" and important. All this, combined with the fact that their prices are by no means low in many cases; that the K. C. gives cigarets away, and that the S. A. moves right with the troops and sometimes gives goods away; all this has placed the two latter organizations way above the Y. M. in the opinion of the majority of the soldiers. Despite the fact that I was always a Y. M. member and booster, I feel a good deal of this myself. It is largely the fault of the personnel. If you stood in a queue for hours to purchase some little luxury you had not had for weeks, perhaps; waited two or three hours, patiently, while you saw spurred officers nonchalantly walk to the head of the long line, purchase stuff in large quantities; and then, when you reached the goal, find everything "fini"; well, you would not cheer for the Y. M. C. A. and its rules, I assure you. We expect that distinction in an army canteen, but feel the Y. M. should be broad and democratic.

Slept well last night, from 8:15 to 6:30; except at 10:15 when we were awakened by the shot-signal for gas-alarm. Got up and slipped on mask in a jiffy. Found it all a mistake, alarm having been given way up front and relayed back. So I went right back to sleep after we cussed Sarge Fuller, who was on post at the corner and had fired the shots.

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(Diary) Mon., 23rd.

Town shelled 12:30 a. m. (24th).

Brooks shook me awake and yelled in my ear, "Say, Tip, they're sending over some shells."

I was sleepy and said I did not believe him, but while we were arguing, a terrible crash convinced me. Got up but we did not go to dugout. Later found this shell hit about 20 or 25 yards back of our building.

Went back to bed. At 2:30 a. m. wakened again—without Brooks' assistance! More shells hitting town. Beat it to dugout in rear. Sat cramped on floor, trying to sleep thus. till 6:30 a. m.

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(Diary) Tues., 24 Sept.

Not shelled. Rode bicycle two kilometres to D(ombasle) and got two packages of Meccas and one cigar at Y. M. C. A. there.

While I was in the Y. M. C. A. the road between Recicourt and Dombasle was shelled with gas. But I never knew it till afterwards. I could not have missed it more than ten minutes.

(Diary) Wed., 25th.

Co. "B" transferred to Army M. P's.

At 7:30 p. m. marched forward, under Capt. A——. Were nearly at our position after a long, hot hike when Maj. C—— sent for us and recalled us. Afraid we'd all be killed!! Afraid we'd all be killed!! Shades of "Captain Jinks of the Horse-Marines"!

Returned to R. Slept in a big dugout and slept well.

At 11:30 p. m. our artillery started. It was magnificent. The greatest barrage to date in the war. The big ones jarred us a bit, and at first some of the boys thot they were arrivals. Of course we could not hear the whistle, or we could have told.

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(Diary) Thurs., Sept. 26.

Zero was 4 a. m. Barrage lifted. The old 147th went over the top singing "Ohio." The Germans are retreating rapidly, leaving many dead and prisoners.

At 8:30 we marched up, to follow troops. Stopped at Division Stockade. Laid on grass, in the sun. It was pleasant. Four miles ahead men were dying. Saw first prisoners brought in. In afternoon we marched on again. Left bicycle at stockade. Took overcoat and rations. Went thru ruins of A(vocourt), past our trenches of ten hours before. Crossed No-Man's-Land, a tangle of scientifically-planted shell-holes. Passed German trenches, on edge of wood. Trees still bore signs in German.

I went way on, with Brooks and a small detail, thru this woods only a mile and a half behind our infantry. Brooks

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and the inoffensive second louie from corps who was detailed to us decided there was nothing there for M. P's to do, so we turned around and walked back. No traffic. Later met Capt. A——, who sent me back to stockade with an order for the detail left there. Traffic moving, but in terrible shape. M. P's doing good work. Arrived prison-cage 5:30. More prisoners coming all the time. Eliminated part of pack and started back on wheel. At A(vocourt), "G—l" took my reply to Capt. A——. Sat on stones of this completely ruined town, waiting for Corp. Kanmacher's detail to pass, to the front. Chatted with Lieut. Hascall of Toledo. Sleepy. After an hour or two, decided K. had passed in the crowd. When I got up lost belt, automatic and canteen. . . . Went on. . . . A beautiful night, with millions of peaceful stars. Stream pouring to front. New mud road across No-Man's-Land and thru woods, a great impediment. Got so tired out at 9:30 that I spread raincoat on ground, donned overcoat, wrapped one blanket about me and laid down. Not bad till after midnight, when I got very cold. Got up at 3 a. m. Hung about rolling kitchen of —th Pioneer Infantry, at work on road. Laid down again at 4 a. m.

(Continued) Fri., 27.

Up at 5 again. Cooks at rolling kitchen refused me coffee. Then I found some low-down cur had stolen my raincoat. Also had taken my saddle-bags right off the bicycle—with 40 cigars, bull, French briar pipe, razor, matches, toilet articles, handkerchiefs, sox, and all reserve rations.

Went on.

RAIN. MUD. COLD. HUNGER.

Met Brooks, who, with two or three men, was lying under a tarpaulin in misery and mud. We started on. Roads awful. Could not push wheel thru mud, so finally ditched it, and rifle fastened to frame. Took small pack. Ploughed thru mud. . . . Ate can of corned beef with Wilking and Corp. Galigher in a dugout—that is, a shelter made of a semi-circle of tin. It was half caved in.

Finally reached place where a muddy spring flowed. I drank some from a biscuit-tin I found. Had had little from last evening till noon today. . . .

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Sgt. Cort and I found a good-sized dugout. I found a canteen and filled it. Laid on bunks and slept on German blankets, from 11:30 a. m. to 1:30 p. m. Cold.

Woke up and went out. Begged a chunk of bacon from a Signal Corps wagon. Returned to dugout, built a small fire and fried bacon, one slice at a time, in the bottom of Cort's messcup, the only implement we had between us. Was it GOOD? Hummm! Ate hardtack I had swiped from a pack belonging to a Pioneer (one of the outfit who stole my stuff last night, and refused me coffee this morning).

What happened next? Of course:—a Lieutenant came along and said we must get out, as "the dugout was wanted for Division Headquarters." We knew the goldbricker was lying, but thot we had best get out.

Moved up about three-quarters of a mile. Found there, at cross-roads fifteen or twenty of our fellows—the greatest number I had seen together for 36 hours. Stole a can of bully-beef from a Headquarters Trooper, handed it to Cort—and in five minutes that Dutch boob laid it down "for a second." Before he turned around it was gone again, of course.

Sgts. Cort, Curtis and I found a big German dugout, with boarded room near the surface (leading into trench); glass windows, bed, chair, electric lights, etc. From this small room steep steps led down twenty or thirty feet to a subterranean gallery, with scores of bunks of the usual chicken-wire. We ate some of the hardtack I had had given me and some more of the corned-willy I had stolen, and went to bed at 7:30.

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(Diary) Sat., Sept. 28.

Slept 11 hours. Up at 6:30. Our artillery giving them hell. Lots of air activity yesterday afternoon, after it cleared, and this a. m.

Ate rest of bacon, fried in a mess-kit I "policed." Also got a cup yesterday. I'm all set now; need only an automatic.

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We left dugout for an hour. On return found muffler, knitted helmet, overcoat, two pairs sox and my red morocco, civil-war "housewife" made by my grandmother, (all hidden in a cupboard), had been stolen, probably by the Frogs. C'est la guerre.

Got some real coffee from an Infantry kitchen, also bread with Karo syrup Stewed up some corned willy ourselves. Roads are drying. We feel more cheerful. There were more of us than needed for traffic—on one "road" only. Worked a little at cross-roads. Strenuous. Our dugout was preempted by French artillery, so got in shallow affair with Corp. Henkel, Tubby Thomas, "Red" Bracken, and Asa Smith. Latter gave me four packages Bull. A godsend. (This is written in my diary in German ink which Henkel found.) Slept in narrow bunk with Ed Henkel—warm but cramped.

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(Diary) Sunday, September 29.

Last night's rain partly stopped. Maj. C—— put me on a detail to scour woods for stragglers from front. None. Our kitchen arrived.

Worked all morning searching woods. In afternoon took a detail of six men to far side of this (second) woods, where we could see M(ontfaucon), captured by the 37th Div. Later advanced our dragnet to a road on a hilltop, which had been camouflaged by the Boches. I walked a lot, as men were posted far apart. Very tired. Walked back to Company Headquarters at cross-roads, opposite Division Headquarters, for mess. Refused even floor-space in another dugout, by Sgts. Cort and Knisely. Rather peeved. At 9:30 p. m. had to walk way back to place where I had been working, at foot of (Montfaucon) hill. Slept with that prince of good scouts, Corp. Ed Bentley, and Corp. Kanmacher, in a small, four-bunk dugout. (Had we obeyed Major C——, both my men and myself would have been on post, without relief for mess or sleep, for 48 hours; with no real work to accomplish. But 1st Sgt. Brooks and I used our own judgment and risked courtmartial. The Major forgot he had even placed us.)

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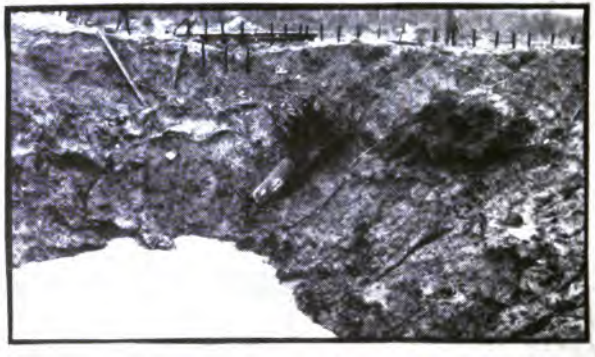

**Above:** A ravine in the **Bois de Montfaucon, Argonne.** Here the 148th Inf. suffered heavy losses from severe M. G. fire.

**Below:** German pill-box in **Bois de Montfaucon,** seen from rear. Captured by 147th Infantrymen.

**Above:** German-camouflaged road from Montfaucon to Iviory. (See pages 136 and 138).

**Below:** Road built by 112th Engineers around a mine-crater, near junction Avocourt-Malancourt roads. Note uprooted tree-trunk.

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(Diary) Mon., Sept. 30.

No breakfast. No work.

Walked back to kitchen in time for noon mess. In afternoon, Corp. Bentley and I searched woods for a dugout. Found one, caved-in, with room on dirt floor for two to sleep. Later got orders to pitch pup-tents, near headquarters. "Froggie" Giroux and I were bunkies. Cut a lot of weeds and grass for mattress. Cold.

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(Diary) Tues., Oct. 1, 1918.

Not so rainy. Division relieved. At 12:45 p. m. started to hike back to R(ecicourt). Not bad, as I was lightly laden. Arrived 5:30. Slept with Corp. Bracken and Sgt. Fuller on bare floor of room in bath-house. Our old orderly-room was being used by a Corps Lieutenant-Colonel.

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(Letter) Sept. 30, 1918.

I am seated on a tree-trunk before a partly-ruined German dugout, where I plan to sleep tonight. It is five days since I have had a chance to write, and, to put it mildly, they have been full of interest. . . . . When we started to move up to the front we passed the artillery, whose detonations nearly took us off our feet. . . . . Saw large and baby tanks. . . . . The prisoners, who came by fifties and hundreds, were both old and young, averaging about 28 or 30 years, I should say. Rather slight and not very military.

The traffic following the troops on the night of the 26th was a wonderful sight. There were no roads. Little armies were building roads over the old No-Man's-Land with branches of trees and bags of gravel. Ahead, the roar and rumble of battle. Above, the quiet light of stars. All about, cursing, lashing mule-skinners, straining mules and eager horses. M. P's keeping the lines from tangling. Excited staff-officers tangling things up and cursing everyone else. All this thru seas of mud. Wagons miring, breaking; horses struggling. Trucks and wagons, stuck in the mud, unceremoniously turned over in the ditch. Nothing must stop that flow of food and ammunition, and artillery to the front. . . .

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Occasionally a German shell landed within a half or quarter-mile on either side. If they had found that road, choked with horse and humanity—God! But they were more intent on withdrawing before our doughboys. . . . . .

After my stuff was stolen the second time (in the dug-out, the 28th) I changed my tactics. From then on, I showed the world no mercy; "I took mine own where I found it," as some poet said on the subject of plagiarizing. . . . . One of our lads "policed" an officer's coat; gave me his old one. I saw a wounded man being carried back. He said he was cold. Spying a discarded overcoat on the ground, I started to put it over him. I put my hand in the pocket, then said. "Oh, no, I'll give you mine." So took off mine, laid it on him and donned the find. It had cigarettes, coffee, sugar, gloves in pockets which he would not need in the hospital, but which I surely could put to use. . . . .

Henry Johnson and I made some stew, of hardtack and tomatoes. You see, we ate and slept whenever we could, even if not hungry or sleepy, as it was impossible to predict when we could do so again. . . . .

When Maj. C—— put my detail on duty on a camouflaged road leading, along a ridge to M——[26], he explained that, though it had just been shelled, killing a Lieutenant of Engineers, the Boches had stopped. Luckily, they did not recommence. . . . . .

I will never forget, nor regret, the stirring six days I have just passed thru. I was so close to it all. Came out tired, dirty, unshaven and unwashed for six days; minus everything I owned this side of the Atlantic, coated with mud, but happy. I had done my tiny bit in a big American success.

---

(Letter) (Written at Void, Meuse.)
October 5, 1918.

We have been thru a most strenuous experience, and I have so much to tell and so much I cannot tell.

Saw a few Hun dead, but did not search trenches for

26Montfaucon.

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others, as some souvenir-hounds did. The corpses excited no particular feeling in me, any more than did the hundreds of horses I saw—worn out, starved to exhaustion, and then shot. In fact, even the few dead Americans, and the many wounded, whom I saw did not affect me at all, as I feared they would. Thank God for this callousness which enveloped me and saved me from the horrors. I kept a firm hold on my sympathies and did not allow my imagination to wander.

The woods where we had our headquarters was shelled indifferently, but nothing dropped within a half-mile of us. It was much safer than back in the "Deserted Village" before the drive. . . .

All the doughboys united in praise of the Fritz machine-gunners. Tricky devils, but game. The fact of their being chained to guns is established; but some say they do it voluntarily, so they can crawl backward and drag guns after them. Others say this is impossible. I do not know.

I emerged from the drive with the following equipment: One blanket, one-half pup-tent and one air-pillow. . . . .

In marching back, after being relieved, we passed a Frenchie who waved at us and cried "Bulgarie fini"; and we later found it was true. The Temple of Terror crumbles. An important stone has crashed to the ground. Turkey is cracked and about to break. Soon the keystone, Austria, will give way, and the whole rotten structure will collapse. . . . . I still have 87 days to make good my prediction.

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(Letter) (Written at Void, Meuse.)
Oct. 5, 1918.

Did I write of a wonderful sight on the first day in the woods[27] Sept. 26th? Jerry appeared to the left and the allied airplanes guarding our elephant-balloons all dashed off in pursuit. He withdrew, drawing them after him. Suddenly, on the right horizon, a second Jerry appeared, streaking at lightning speed. He headed straight for one of our unguarded observation-balloons, and sailed gracefully over it. An instant later it burst in flames. A parachute detached

27Foret d'Argonne.

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itself from the bulk and floated, thistle-downy, to the ground with the observer. Hardly had the German plane destroyed the first before he turned and made for the next one in line. Before it could be drawn down, he sailed above it, setting it afire likewise. The observer jumped with his parachute, but the latter caught afire and the unfortunate hero was killed... Next day our men downed a plane which was said to be that of the successful raider. An hour later, saw a third balloon go down in smoke and flame. Could not tell if observer escaped or not. Two days later, saw a Jerry drop, like a blazing meteor, tho I had not seen the air-fight preceding.

About 6 p. m. on Thursday the 3rd, we were jammed into trucks and set forth. It was a miserable night, for we were much more cramped than in the freight cars, and the Frog drivers manipulated their engines so that the foulest of gases was emitted, gagging one and burning the eyes. Our chauffeur also lost the train several times. About 8 a. m. we detrucked and ate travel rations. It was about 9:30 a. m. before we joined the other camions on the outskirts of an attractive French town.

The customary inefficiency was responsible for our cooling our heels here until 12:30 p. m.; and then it was discovered that this was the wrong town. Furthermore, had it not been for the resourcefulness and initiative of First Sergeant Brooks, we would have been compelled to hike 20 or 30 kilos to Void, our correct destination. In some way he prevailed on the Frog chauffeurs to take us to Pagny-sur-Meuse. There we slept that night, hiking to Void the next day.

(Letter) (Written at Void, Meuse, Oct. 6th.)

So stiff and cold I can hardly write. Have been working in our Orderly Room, which is a cement-floored affair; cold, dank and damp; opening on a chill, dark courtyard. As there was neither table nor light, had to work on an old stone sink, before an opened window.

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That was rich—that clipping from a letter written by Major C—— in which he said he had "just had a dip in the Marne." It was a classic bit of buncombe. We were nowhere near that famous river. It was the Meuse river.[28]

By the way, this letter is written on real Hun paper; taken from a "good Dutchman" in No-Man's-Land by Walter Heileman, who gave it to me.

Did I tell you of eating German hard-tack? It is about an inch square, half-inch thick, brown, sweet and not very hard. Good. We found lots of it. . . . In one dugout, boys of our outfit found an officers' mess all ready to cook—potatoes peeled, war-bread cut, barley-coffee ready to boil, cabbage, etc. . . . . You see, the Heinies retreated so fast they had little time to lay traps. Still, we took precautions.

Did Mrs. T. tell you any special dope she got in letters? If not don't mention this to her. I can't write it. It is nothing to worry about.[29]

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(Letter) (Same place, Oct. 6th.)

Your suggestion of sending a little money-order for a birthday present is good. I am not allowed to request it being sent. You see, I am fighting for Freedom.

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(Letter) (Void), Oct. 7, 1918.

Speaking of sacrifice, Mother, the pleasant old French Madame here tells me she has seven sons in l'Armée; also some grandsons.

Was greatly interested in last night's news that a further advance had been made in the Argonne. The Kaiser's beautiful dream—the world's nightmare—is fading. The first gleam of dawn for the weary world glimmers in the East, where Bulgaria has been beaten to her servile knees, the cruel Ottomans whipped and ancient Damascus taken by Twentieth Century civilization. Soon the day will come up over the hills and there shall be no more night.

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28At Bourmont.

29This referred to this lady's husband, Lt. E. E. Taylor, a friend, who was gassed and slightly wounded in the Argonne.

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(Letter) (Void) Oct. 8, 1918.

Got a letter today postmarked July 11th.

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(Letter) (Void), Oct. 8, 1918.

Got paid today for August. When we figured this payroll, Exchange was 5.65 francs per dollar. Our Supply Officer holds us up six weeks; meanwhile exchange sinks to 5.50. Wonder who got the difference?

I do not know when I have seen a more beautiful country than that between here and the next town.[30] As I rolled along a fine French road in a truck yesterday, stretched below me was a wide expanse of pasture land, a beautiful, fresh green after the recent rain. Dark green bushes dotted it here and there. In the distance loomed a large hill, shaped for all the world like an artificial rampart. Cutting across the meadow was one of France's orderly, placid canals. It has the regular, scientific curves of a man-made affair, but its borders are artistically laced with weeds, breaking the severe lines. Like all others, both banks bear regularly spaced rows of trees—maples, in this case. One, blushing red from the impatient hands of Jack Frost, stood out boldly, its scarlet note of shame contrasting oddly with the virgin green of the company.

A large barge moved slowly along the water, the family all on deck. It was towed by two big, fine horses, who paced along the tow-path at a funereal step.

Farther in the distance other hills rose in soft ampleness. The white road curved up their sides, like a livid scar. The tip of a church-steeple showed over the hill-top. What a country to live in—what a country to die for!

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(Letter) (Essey, Meurthe & Moselle.)
October 9th, 1918.

Move, move, move. Just as we get settled in one place, off we go to another.

Left[31] this morning, in a truck. In two and a half hours

30Pagny-sur-Meuse.
31Void.

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arrived here. A ruined town. Plastered with German signs, the favorite one being Unterstand. Had not been here 45 minutes before an air-battle developed. Somebody was shooting A. A. guns at someone's else aircraft. Couldn't see. Didn't try hard, anyway, as I was eating some cold canned-beans and two slices of plain bread. . . . . Water here labeled bad. Most of our bunch disbelieved and now have mild dysentery. Not I.

Found lots of china in the house where we have Head-quarters and sleep. You should have seen Brooks drinking coffee out of a beer-mug and imitating a German officer.

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(Letter) (Essey), Oct. 10th.

I am sitting on the typewriter-box, with one candle on my up-turned mess-cup and another on a tin box of hard-tack, as I type. Around an excellent old French table, five or six of the fellows are playing poker.

Brooks woke me up again last night, in our comfortable rear room and told me the old Huns were strafing again. So we carried our bunks down to the dugout and went to sleep there. They say this place is shelled every night—but not right where we are. I suppose it is the bridge over a tiny stream they are trying for. That is about four blocks away.

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(Letter) (Essey), 14 Oct., 1918.

Opposite the window of our orderly room here is the usual ruined village church. On its shattered tower hangs the town clock, its great hands stilled at quarter to three. I looked at it and wondered what happened when its slow, steady circling was stopped. Was it a sunny afternoon, or in the chill, dark hours just before dawn? Did the invading Hun smash it, back in fateful '14, or was it a martyr, sacrificed to allied guns, a month ago, that France might regain this land?

So I was musing, when Captain A—— sat bolt upright in his rude chair, his hand grasping his automatic.

"By Gum!" he exclaimed (or words to the same import). "The hands on the clock are moving!"

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I looked. It was five minutes of three. The huge minute-hand had advanced 10 minutes.

The doughty Captain pondered. "Must be German spies," he announced.

The simplicity of this system of conveying information burst upon me. The two hands, with the 60-minute and 12-hour marks, could be placed in countless combinations. Only chance would betray it. Who would think of watching a broken clock on a shell-wrecked tower?

We watched it intently. The minute-hand wavered, then moved back to the 45-minute mark.

Then I laughed.

A sparrow had alighted on the end of the hand and his tiny weight had forced the delicately-hung pointer down. The bird shifted a little nearer the center and the hand moved upward slightly.

Another mystery had been solved by the M. P's.

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(Letter) (Essey), October 16, 1918.

We have been "salvaging" many things, but the limit was reached this morning when Foppe and Earl Baker went forth and acquired a Ford touring car. It's a regulation, O. D., issue car, used about three weeks, with a smashed radiator. They are going to try to repair it.

I was thinking today of the queer appearance of the boys after the Drive in the Woods. "Monk" Wilking plowed thru the mud in short German leather army boots, with a "Gott Mit Uns" belt outside his blouse. As many as dared had "mislaid" their U. S. Enfields and carried short, light, German rifles. A few lucky ones had the excellent Luger automatic pistols. Many wore the square German knapsack, with fur back, to make the load soft on the shoulders. Corp. Dick Sommers carried a French cavalry sabre as his souvenir. His brother George wore (when he dared) a tall silk hat he had "salvaged" from a deserted home. It was a non-descript array.

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(Letter) (Essey), Oct. 16, 1918.
(By candle-light at 2 p. m.)

We are about to move again, leaving this, our third, front for either a well-deserved rest or a new area of battle.

Busy last night. Great traffic on roads. Capt. A—— wanted a French Gendarme, on a certain post, to co-operate with our M. P's. (You know, we have some Gendarmes attached to us, for our M. P's cannot give orders to French troops, and vice versa.) The French Lieutenant in charge of this detachment of eight Froggies realizes he cannot talk English, but the Captain thinks he can talk French. He really has acquired a fair working vocabulary of Anglo-French. So he explained to the Lieutenant, with limited French and unlimited gesture, improvising words and throwing in a flavor of German, that he wanted one Gendarme stationed at a certain point on the road, to control traffic, with our M. P., and explained his duties and orders. Further made clear with a map.

The horizon-blue-Lieutenant, with the polite air and the corner-curved mustaches, departed. The Captain pushed his dinky overseas cap back on his head, tossed the latter in a cocky fashion, and smiled with satisfaction.

"Guess the old Cap'n can tell 'em, can't he?" he exulted.

We agreed.

In five minutes one of the boys rushed in. "Captain," he exclaimed excitedly, "all the Gendarmes are packing up, issuing rations, soap, matches and candles and getting ready to leave at once, sir."

The Captain did not boast of his translation work for some time.

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(Letter) (Written at Toul, Meurthe et Moselle),
Oct. 18, 1918.

October 16th was a dreary, drizzling day. Waited hours for the trucks we expected, to haul us. None came. At 7:15 I went to the dugout and laid on my antiquated sofa, "accoutred as I was."

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At 10:15 I was awakened by a great commotion. Thot a shell had hit us. Found that little Cook Spicer had hot-headedly accused "Farmer Bob" (Paul) Allison of cheating at poker, and had struck him in the face. The rest of the fellows interfered before it went further.

Oh, I must digress to tell you about little Abie, the New Joisey Jew, Major C——'s orderly. He was among those present at an all-night session, three or four days before, a winning streak so enthralling him that he forgot the passage of time. For a cushion he used some clean underwear, neatly folded.

Scene 2: Major C——, in his deep dugout, two blocks away. The Major disrobes, throws away old underwear and takes an improvised bath. (Dim lights. Music sad and slow.)

Bath finished, Major looks for Abie with his clean underwear. No Abie. No underwear. Shivers. Horrors. Curses; "not loud but deep." Curtain.

Act II. Major's headquarters (next morning). In a scene full of dramatic fervor and fire, Major denounces Abie and fines him $10 "for playing poker."

And the tragedy of it all was that Abie only won $7 at the game.

Well, to resume; before this excitement died, Brooks entered with orders to march at once. Hike. Not ride; hike.

In ten minutes we were on our way. The stone roads were coated with one to four inches of soupy mud. The night was cloudy and the rain seeped from the clouds intermittently. We hiked from 10:30 p. m. till 2 a. m. Pretty tough.

We then arrived at a narrow-gauge railroad and climbed aboard. This was a U. S. narrow-gauge, scarcely bigger than those toy affairs at amusement parks. They jammed thirty of us in each of the tiny gondola cars. We had just room to squat.

It was cold, rainy, and I was sweating from the hike. I put my overcoat over my head and shoulders and tried to nap. I was just dozing when—"Toot, Toot, Toot, TOOT," shrieked the frantic whistle of our toy engine.

"Smash!" "Crash!" We stopped with a jerk.

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Our car turned sideways and tipped. "Over we go," I thought. I could not rise, for I could not disentangle my legs. But luckily we did not tip over. Then a terrible hissing burst on the air. We scrambled out in haste, afraid the boiler would explode, but the steam escaped harmlessly.

Thus it happened: At the bottom of the hill we were on, a second engine had been attached, to help make the grade. I had been aware of this, and had been worried over the reckless speed at which we had traveled, for these narrow-gauged cars tip easily. A big motor-truck, out of gas, had stalled on the road alongside which we ran. It had been too close, and our engine had side-swiped it. The engineer saw it, put on brakes, whistled for the rear engineer to do same, opened safety-valve and jumped.

Some of our boys were riding in the front of the first car. They jumped safely. The only man hurt was second to me; his leg was slightly injured.

The little engine was knocked off to the left, way clear of the tracks, half burying itself in the earth. Four cars were derailed, including ours. The body of our car was twisted off the trucks as well, but we were lucky not to have tipped.

We waited around, building fires to keep a bit warm, while some engineers fixed the cars so we could back about a quarter mile down grade to some sidings. It was then after daylight.

The friendly engineer let me fill my cup from the boiler. Heated it further by sticking his steam-exhaust pipe (mud-covered) in the cup, then added coffee and brought it to a boil on a little fire. Ate hardtack.

It was 10:30 a. m. before negro engineers laid a new track around the scene of the wreck and a new engine took us on.

What a twisting and turning, a doubling and redoubling we made! The watch-charm train would plunge into some woods, the branches and even the trunks of the trees scraping the sides of the cars; then run alongside a road for a while, then cut across a meadow, like a "zig-zag soldat." ("Zig-zag" is a French slang for "drunk.")

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About noon we arrived at a certain town. There were twelve trains of seven or eight cars each, in the movement. They all assembled there and we waited till 4 o'clock; why, we didn't know. Finally I ventured up into town and lined up to buy some grapes. After waiting half an hour, the whistles tooted and we ran to get back on. More curves and turns. A right-angled turn didn't feaze these trains a bit. But a tiny grade did. We were going up an almost imperceptible ascent when the baby loco began to give signs of distress. We all jumped out and pushed the train up the hill, then climbed in, and with a toot of thanks from the engineer, off we went again. We seldom went a mile without a stop of from a minute to an hour and a half; and it was 7 p. m., and dark, when we arrived in this city.[32]. That is, they said we were here, but, of course, we had a two-mile hike to our bunks, on the top floor of a permanent Caserne, where we arrived at 8 p. m., after 22½ hours of travel. I do not know how far we traveled, but I doubt if it was over twelve miles as the crow flies.

Slept on the bare floor. I bunked with "Army" (Armstrong), the big, likeable, warm-hearted cop from Cleveland.

Corporals Lucas, Galigher and I had dejuener at the Hotel Metz. Good coffee au lait, confiteur, bread and butter, and deux oeufs, plat (fried), cost us about 3 francs each. THEN, we went to the Y. M. C. A. for a second breakfast; had beaucoup jam, fine bread and butter, bowl of splendid chocolate, for only a franc and a half.

Did I tell you the one John Kaipszak, our burly, simple Pole, pulled while in E——?[33] He came in the Orderly Room, complaining "No could sleep last night. First I scratch like this (illustrating) then like that. All time scratch. Hot-dam cooties. Not leety (little) cooties, but Oh, hot-dam big ones. And, this morning, I wake up—my dog-tag gone."

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(Letter) (Toul), Oct. 19, 1918.

"Shorty" Osborne and I sight-saw the Cathedral today. It is quite well known, I believe. Commenced in 940 A. D., it took 200 years of patient artistry to complete the massive

32Toul.
33Essey.

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yet graceful structure. About the walls are altars to various saints, all of different styles and dates. . . . . We mounted the tower, guided by a French soldier, probably invalided. The staircase was of stone hollowed by centuries of climbers. Had a wonderful view from the top, after climbing 327 steps—about 250 feet.

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(Continued) Written on train, somewhere in France,
Monday, Oct. 21, 1918, 1:45 p. m.

I returned to barracks about 8 o'clock Saturday night. Roll was still made up. Using that for a pillow, overcoat for mattress, the floor for springs and raincoat for covers, I slept as well as these facilities and the noisy crap-shooters would permit.

Awakened at 1:30 a. m. (Sunday) and marched, in a fine drizzle, a couple of kilo's to train. We boarded the good old 40-or-8 box-cars. Wise old Brooks fixed it right for us. Had 20 to 28 men in a so-called 40-man car—instead of 40 to 50, as before. Not bad at all. Room to lay out and sleep. It was 2:30 when we arrived at railroad. At 3, we boarded. Started at 6:30! . . . . . Imagine getting up at 1:30 a. m., fully dressed and packed, to catch a 6:30 train. Slept from 6:30 till about 8. . . . Scenery beautiful. Passed within three or four miles of B——.[34] Henry Johnson and I played "500" with Spicer and Wilking. Played all afternoon and two or three hours after sunset, by candle-light. A case of tomatoes was our table and score-card. Our rolls, tomato cans or folded blankets formed seats. Johnson and I made a "bed" together. Hard and cold, but slept. Passed thru or near V——[35] again this morning.

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34Bourmont.
35Versailles.

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# FLANDERS

(Letter Continued) Somewhere in Belgium, (Hooghlede), Oct. 22, 1918.

FTER a little over three months in France, at midnight last night we crossed the border. Saw my first Belgian town outlined in the misty moonlight at 12:30 a. m., and heard the church chimes ring out.

We detrained at 6. Had a cup of hottest, strongest coffee I ever drank, from a kitchen of another division. At 8 we started to hike. Never saw such scenes of desolation. In many ways I do not exaggerate when I say Dante might have had an entirely new conception of Hell, if he had seen this. Imagine a flat country—flat and soggy. Its few trees are cut off at the roots, or, if any escaped that fate, shorn of every limb by the holocaust. Shell-holes touch shell-holes, rim to rim, filled with a slimy, scummy, green water or with a bilious brown seepage. Matériel of war is littered all about. Old trenches, torn and burst out, run between shell-holes. Barbed-wire stands only in scattered segments. I saw twelve big tanks, within three or four miles, smashed or overturned. These were all within 100 yards of the road. Saw skeletons of British dead, identified by uniforms. One brave lad had lost his head, another his leg, at death. This scene, bordered and tinted with soupy mud, stretched ahead, behind and on either side, with that appearance of infinitude which flatness lends a landscape.

As we marched on we came to a cross-roads, near which were some of the heterogeneous huts and dugouts, of brick, stone, cement, and iron, which are so common. To our surprise, we saw a sign by the side of the road: "St. X——— Ici" (Here).

I am writing exactly when I tell you that I had had no idea that the place had ever been a town-site. Nor, after a close survey as we passed, did I see anything to prove the truth of the signboard.

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At length we came to another sign, also bearing the name of a town and the French word "Here." This we believed—why? Because we saw one lamp-post, cracked and bent to the earth. Somehow, it had escaped further destruction; the only material thing of a whole village. Until today I had thought the towns of France, where the homes were a mass of stone fragments, a foot or so high, were ruined. Here was not a vestige of home or church, foundation or steeple.

Hiking pretty tough, but, after noon, the country gradually took on a more civilized appearance. Here trees still stood—some of them. Partly ruined homes reminded one of France. After eight hours' hiking (the worst yet, tho I stood it, with my reduced pack, with no worse effect than sore shoulders and a Large Tired Feeling), we arrived here.

Was surprised to notice difference from French towns. Homes are much finer, newer, more modern and convenient. They are usually of brick, while the French are of stone. These people were very evidently more enterprising and prosperous than their Gallic neighbors.

The town is very badly shot-up. (This had been way behind Fritzie's line until the big push.) There is a beautiful big church opposite our Orderly Room—all ruined. The Huns left six days before we came.

When we pulled into St. Jean, Belgium, where we detrained, a car with a wine-keg was nearby and the boys soon discovered it. Had **beaucoup vin rouge,** till a Second Loot (probably thirsty also) caught Sgt. Knisely.

I will never forget little Spicer, the Cook, as we lined up for that hike. He was still talkative from the stuff in his canteen. "Here it is" he complained, jokingly, "My 22nd birthday, on the 22nd of October and I have to hike 22 kilometres." Over and over again he repeated this sad coincidence of figures.

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(Letter Continued) Wed., Oct. 23, 1918.

Up at 7 this morning, after lying half-awake, listening to what I thot was rain, for a long time. When I raised up and looked out of my paneless waindow, I saw the cheerful sight of German prisoners shuffling along, four abreast, their boots making the noise I had mistaken for rain. The whole company were guarded by two or three little French horsemen, and, believe me, the Heinies marched fast. I was told they had been streaming thru since 3 a. m.

No supper last night; or breakfast today. Our so-called "Rolling Kitchen" is gathering moss somewhere. Munched hardtack. I have a slight attack of dysentery, brought on, probably, by drinking some water from a locomotive filling-tank. Feeling better.

Sgt. Cort and I wandered about, near town, this morning. Here are a few souvenirs; one a certificate that Pvt. Josef Weis is entitled to an Iron Cross, Second Class; another certifies he is entitled to a wound-stripe. Also a letter to him. Can you read it?

Although a week after the battle, we saw three unburied Frenchmen. Near one of them lay a sort of Army notebook, with his name, regiment, etc. I picked it up. There was a picture of two bright, pretty children, three or four years old—and it was smeared with their brave father's life-blood. God! How my heart ached. His head had been bandaged, when, apparently, shrapnel dealt a death blow. Another "Mort sur la Champ d'Honneur, Pour la Patrie."

Also saw a dozen or two dead Huns, wounded in every part of the body—some grewsome sights. . . . . A detail of our Engineers were digging one big hole for them all.

We were luckier than Sgt. Fuller, who, strolling about as we had done, was seen by the little red-headed colonel of our Engineers and ordered to assist bury the enemy cadavers. Despite a protest from little Sgt. Fuller that he was an M. P. sergeant and that even M. P. privates were exempt. by G. H. Q. orders, from that sort of detail, the Colonel was obdurate and they put in a pleasant hour or two.

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(Letter Continued)

I am sending also a snap-dragon from a Belgian garden. It showed its cheerful color in the midst of rack, ruin and desolation, like the brave, red heart of Belgium.

Civilians are streaming back into town. Some are young fellows, apparently of fighting age—a strange sight, after France. Several women; the young ones mostly flaxen-haired peasant-types, with ruddy complexions. Saw one cart, pulled by a dog, who ran, in harness, beneath it. Man with wheelbarrow, assisted by an 8-year-old boy, in a sort of rope harness. Also saw a three-wheeled cart, one small wheel at front, pulled by two oxen.

These people talk English much more than the French. Their soldiers seem to like the Amexes very well; the civilians are a bit shy. A local priest told Capt. A—— that we were the very first Americans they had ever seen.

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(Diary) Thurs., Oct. 24.

Got our arm-bands, which Major C—— and Captain I—— went to Paris to get (while we were on the Pannes sector, St. Mihiel front).

Of course, these could be bought nowhere else but in Paris and by no one else but a Major. Why Capt. I——, M. C., went along, no one knew.

(Letter) (Hooghlede, Belgium), Oct. 24th.

Have had a very difficult time getting fed here. The M. P's have always kept "open house" for anybody, feeding any soldier who was hungry, but, with our kitchen lost (as usual), these other outfits are awful tight. Won't feed us en masse, but we scatter and bum our mess, in bunches of two or three. This morning, for instance, all I could get was a cup of coffee, at the Statistical Section, and a half-cup of coffee, three pieces of bacon and four hardtacks from the Headquarters Company of the Engineers. But our Crawling Kitchen has at last found us and our troubles are over.

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The day after we arrived, many big H. E. shells and mines were dug up by the Engineers, from under the roads we had hiked on. Gives a fellow a shivery feeling.

Saw a refugee returning today, with his wife and two children. His household goods (mattress, chairs, etc.) were loaded, along with four live goats, on a wagon drawn by a donkey. . . . . One old man, who stayed here, hid his cow in a cellar for five days and did not bring her out till the day we arrived. You can bet he kept his hand on the rope.

Here's a rich one: Hatfield and Powers just brought in a bulging mail-sack from the Division P. O. When I opened it, I found it to be the batch addressed to Lt. Grannan's company; which I sorted out from our mail and returned to the P. O. two weeks ago, to be forwarded to them, way down near General Headquarters, France.

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(Letter) (Meulebeke), 29 Oct., 1918.

I am sitting on a shaving-filled tick, on the mosaic floor of the school building where we are quartered, trying to smoke a mixture of Bull and Belgian Synthetic-tobacco, in my new red-clay Flemish pipe.

We were awakened at 4:30 a. m. yesterday and ordered to clean up, make rolls, eat, etc., and leave at 6. Cheerfully told Brooks that it was preposterous. I've watched this outfit too long not to know we'd never leave at 6. We pulled out at 8:30.

Sun shone brightly, as it has for a week. For the first time, I had "quill" enough to have my roll carried on the wagon. Had only my two musset bags with toilet articles and reserve rations; mask helmet, raincoat, overcoat and cane. It was the most reasonable hike we have made yet. For the first time, our kitchen really was a Rolling Kitchen. serving us soup and coffee at noon.

The country has a quaint charm all its own. Of course, it is very flat and sparsely wooded, but hereabouts, the Boches had retreated so fast there was little destruction. The red-tiled roofs, the church spires and an occasional windmill were picturesque. Old willow-tree stumps, short, thick, and with only a few straggly branches, lined the roads.

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Saw some French cavalry, bearing their long, steel lances. What a gallant picture they made; a touch of the old-time war, with its glamour. Also a company of French cyclists, making a very soldierly appearance.

As we hiked into M——[1] every house bore proudly the tri-color of Belgium, hidden during German occupancy.

These people try to do everything possible for us. Of course, the shop-keepers are robbers, as they are world-wide and ages-old. But a good deal of that is due to the very foolish extravagance of the boys. The stores offer Belgian cigarets, which are infinitely viler than the unbelievably vile French cigarets; Belgian pseudo-tobacco (horse-hair and cabbage leaves, shredded); cigaret-papers; coffee; bread; postals and pipes; and this is about all.

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(Diary) Mon., Oct. 28, 1918.

Three bombs dropped in town about 7 p. m., about half mile from us. One hit Division Inspector's car, killing a Belgian soldier and wounding two French and five men of our Headquarters Troop.

This was the night Captain I——, our Medic, amused us so. A bunch of us were standing in the hallway, listening to the drone of Jerry's motor and waiting to see what would happen.

Suddenly, down the street, we saw a light flashing from house to house, anxiously. Under any circumstances the showing of a light was forbidden, but, with Jerry actually overhead, it was criminal. Soon the Doctor hove into view behind the flashlight, so excited he couldn't find our billet. When he found us, he dove into the hallway and, knocking two men over in his haste, made for the cellar "toute de suite." This confirmed his title of "Dugout King."

[1] Meulebeke.

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(Letter) (Meulebeke), Tues., Oct. 29, 1918.

Went to a shop after mess this evening. No cigars. The Madamoiselle asked me to step across the hall to their cuisine (kitchen). There was another girl, two older women and an old man. The girls talked quite good French, but the older people did not versteh. There was also a French soldier sitting there, with whom I conversed. He said the Yanks were very brave and "poli" soldiers; and good comrades as well. As usual, he shrugged his shoulders over the English; and diplomatically said "they are very phlegmatic." . . . A Jew from Division Headquarters drifted in and talked to the girls in low German. I showed them my photos and postals from home. They could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw a ten-story hotel. Counted the stories carefully, announced the result, then emitted a prolonged and awed "Ooooh!" One inquired, "How many windows in that?" But when they saw a 21-story office-building, they did not know what to say. Wanted to know how many families lived in that. . . . I tried to tell them of 40-story buildings in New York, and believe I over-stepped myself. "Are they as high as a church?" they questioned, increduously.

The girls are not nearly so pretty as the French; nor so brave. Seven bombs were dropped in the town this evening; and they were so scared they could not speak. I have been with the French during worse raids, and they laughed and said "Ce ne fait rien."

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(Letter) Written Under Shell-Fire,
(Near Olsene, Belgium),
3:20 p. m., Oct. 31.

Just as I wrote the above heading, as if to verify it, the Boches sent one over which rattled its fragments on the roof of the somewhat damaged house in which Bramel, Sommers, Brock and I are sheltered.

Well, the company pulled out of M——[2] about 5:30 last night. It was a good hike for a couple of hours, then we got behind another outfit, and frequent and over-long halts

[2] ebeke.

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were the result. It was chilly and damp. Arrived in D——[3] about 10:30. Put up in a factory. Lt. Ketcham, Billeting Officer, tried to make us lie in billets recently evacuated by equines, but I refused. So Corp. Bob Reese and I rummaged about till we found another room with some clean, dry chaff on the floor. Made up a good bunk.

The hike (from M——[2] to D——[3]) was an interesting one. Flares and signal-lights dotted the horizon. Gun-flashes winked all along the line. There were several air-fights in the star-lit sky. We heard the rat-tat-tat-tat of the machine-guns from the planes and saw the red points of the bullets flash thru the night. I am told they bombed M——[2] severely, causing heavy damage and starting fires.

Three or four stray shells dropped very near our factory last night. There was some sneeze-gas. A—— was fussing quite a bit about it this morning. Think I may have got a touch of it myself. It simply irritates the nose, you know—absolutely no danger to it. Its purpose is to prevent the wearing of a gas-mask, and it is supposed to be followed up by real gas, but they didn't do that.

Started out about 7:30 a. m. today for a cross-roads a short distance forward. I continued on, to the right, to a small pontoon bridging a famous river, but Capt. A—— made me go back to the cross-roads. . . . . Laid around there, watching prisoners come back; for they did come back, by hundreds. "Asked" one for a cigar, which he gave me. Cheap affair, but it tasted good. . . . Got a cup of coffee at kitchen and Sgt. Cort, Corp. Bracken and I split a can of salmon three ways. . . . Corp. Foppe came up from M——[2] in a sidecar, with mail. I was in luck to the extent of seven letters.

While we were seated in back of the former inn at this crossroads, eating our very frugal dinner above mentioned and reading these letters, Fritzie began to try for the crossroads and some shells landed within 150 or 200 yards, exploding harmlessly in the black soil.

[2]Meulebeke.
[3]Dentergehm.

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(Continued)

Shortly after noon we were ordered to advance. About twenty of us started, under lanky "West Point Eddie"—Sgt. Knisely. We had gone perhaps half a kilo when someone yelled, a shell whistled "wooooOOOOO! WHANG! Whooz!" First comes the whistle, growing louder with a menacing crescendo, then the explosion, then the whistling of the flying fragments.

I only got down on one knee. Would swear I saw a piece whiz six inches above Whisner's head.

Up and on. In about fifteen or twenty seconds, another warning whistle. E. J. was down FLAT before that broke!

Up again and on. Then came a rush order from A——, via Foppe on motorcycle, to leave road and take shelter.

We got behind a brick house and for twenty or thirty minutes had quite a time. Fritzie shot about twenty near us. Each time someone would yell a warning and we would lean flat on the earth. Fragments of two or three of them fell within ten or fifteen feet of me. "Red" Fox, Steinmetz and others gathered souvenirs. Capt. A— came back. Said that, hearing a warning whistle, he dove head first into the doorway of a cottage. It was a dud! But, while he was inside, another just missed the building, so he came back.

After this cooled off we came on up here, near the bridge on which French engineers have been working. We got it here for about an hour, when Heinie tried to get the bridge. The very last shot—just as I started to write this letter—was the only one which came very close. Since I started to write this, not another shell has dropped near us. Our artillery has advanced beyond the town across the river[4] and for a half or three-quarters of an hour has been giving them H——. Surely is a lot of difference between Arrivals and Departures! . . . . Will write more later.

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(Continued) (Written in Cruyshautem, Friday, Nov. 1, 1918, 8:30 p. m.)

Here I am, O. K. To continue: We sat around the stove, sneezing, coughing and wiping our eyes. Finally woke up

4Lys.

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to the fact that we had been slightly gassed. Think it was some shot over that morning; just a little "hangover." Several of us tried on our masks, but they were not needed.

Slept in a little side-room, on a straw-covered floor, George Sommers sharing my blanket. Corps. Bracken, "Red" Fox, Dick Sommers and Pvts. Bramel, Harry Thomas and Brock were seated in the kitchen, about half an hour after George and I had (literally) "hit the hay." Indistinctly, I heard them arguing. Tubby Thomas was saying his idea of heaven would be to sit in a saloon in Cincinnati, Ohio, U. S. A., and drink all the beer he could swallow. Dick Sommers said he was a d——d hog. Tubby said, "Well, you sit around this stove and fry one mess of French-frieds after another. Now, can you tell me why a beer-hog is any worse than a French-fried-potato-hog?" Just as this philosophic argument reached this interesting point, "CRASH!!" a shell hit, not over fifteen feet from the house, its fragments peppering the building. French-fried spuds littered the kitchen and the argument ceased abruptly. A second shell fell, within two feet of the other, almost immediately. But, with these two stanzas, Fritzie stopped evening choir practice on his Hymn of Hate and we slept soundly.[4a]

Up at 6:30 this morning. Thank heaven, the sun was shining. Fried some more potatoes. Made coffee. Hardtack.

Occupants of cottage returned. You can't beat these Belgians! One man of the family had worked some years in an Omaha packing house, returning here to marry, in 1912. Spoke good English.

Busy traffic showed the enemy was again retreating. At noon we crossed the bridge and entered O——.[5] Found Company Headquarters in the home of Dr. De Baets, evidently a cultured and prosperous man. Had modern office equipment and shelves of MSS. books in French; also original poems in Flemish. Dead scattered about town.

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4aThis was the closest I came to earning a wound-stripe or wooden kimona. Close enough for an M. P.

5Olsene.

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Paris-Metz Road

RECICOURT

(Page 130)

M. P. PRISON CAGE

Verrier-Fme, Argonne

Held 900 Huns. (P. 133).

What the world's greatest barrage did to Hun front-line trenches. Once heavily wooded.

(Page 132)

Crossroads, Bois de Montfaucon, Argonne. (Page 135).

Div. Hq. Hq. Troop

Dressing Station Cemetery

M. P. Hq.

RUINED

German plank-road Bois de Montfaucon Argonne

CHURCH

TOWER

ESSEY.

(Page 143)

Hq. Co. A. 112 M. P. ESSEY, Pannes Sector, St. Mihiel front. (P. 143).

Railroad Station OLSENE, Belgium, showing Hunnish destruction.

(Page 159)

"Armistice Cottage."

Hq. Co. A. 112 M. P. Nov. 10 to 12, 1918. Between Auwegem and Syngem. (P. 166).

Escaut River, crossed by 37th Division under heavy fire.

Review of 37th Div. by General J. J. Pershing. (P. 201).

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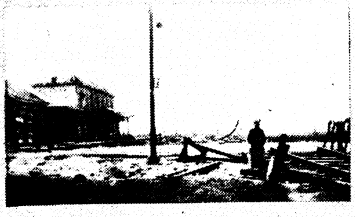

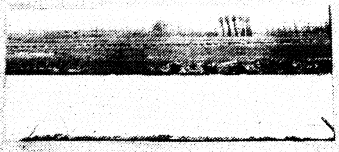

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(Diary) Friday, November 1, 1918.

Company moved on[6] at 3 p. m. I caught a ride on horse-drawn ambulance. Three observation balloons moved past us, towed by autos, with steel cables. Jerry tried to get one but failed, losing one of his planes in the attempt.

We arrived C——[7] at four o'clock, and established our Company Headquarters in the Town Hall. Jerry came over and dropped some bombs fairly near. Then a battery began shelling the town. One lit on house right next to the court-yard—in rear of Town Hall—where we were eating mess. Scattered dust over our mess. We also scattered! Most of the shells were duds, however. The gunners were apparently using the big church across the street to sight on, as the shells would first come on one side of the steeple, then the other. . . . . Fellows found a big pile of municipal script-money, issued under the Germans, in the Town Hall. Only half-signed, but some of the boys went out and bought out all the cognac in a cafe with this. Later discovered and forced to make restitution. . . We arrived here twelve hours after the invaders departed. The first Americans the citizens had seen were our Infantry, at 7 a. m. today. . . This was the Division objective, but have gone way beyond. . . Bob Streeper, medic., and I went out and got a nice room and bed to schlaapen. Writing this by candle-light, with windows toward enemy covered. They have not sent any over for one or two hours, but our guns shake the house when they fire.

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(Letter—Continued) Sat., Nov. 2, 1918, 3:30 p. m.

Slept fine, with some shelling. The Belgian beds were never built for lanky Yanks. Never got up till 8:15; S. O. L. for breakfast, and our hostess asked us into her spotless kitchen for coffee. Did we refuse? We had her send out and get four eggs, which cost 1 frank each. With four cups of coffee, plenty of real milk, two lumps of sugar to a cup, lots of Belgian bread and butter, we broke our fast in great shape.

6From Olsene.
7At Cruyshautem.

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(Letter—Continued) Sun., Nov. 3, 1918.

Slept fine last night. Huns sent over quite a few shells, but none came near us. Spent evening with these people. Two French tank-men there. One, from Bordeaux, talked Spanish with Streeper; the other, from Paris, talked French with me. The former also talked Flemish with our hostess, who talked French with me and German with Streeper. And Bob and I talked together in English!

(Letter) (Written in Thielt), Mon., Nov. 4.

In "rest-billets" again. Our second big drive—on our fourth front—is history.

Bade good-bye to our friends, the Meersmans,[8] at noon yesterday. Slipped the Madame a five-frank note, which she was unwilling to take. Told her to buy souvenirs for the children. Invited us to come back after the war. Waited all afternoon for marching orders. None came. Had to return and request our room again. Some shelling during night; apparently heavier guns. Unhurt.

Breakfast with company today—coffee, bread, syrup. Hiked with Bob Reese and Dave Thomas, prudently allowing the company to go on ahead. Soon caught a ride on French wagon. Rode back thru O——[9] and to D——,[10] where we got a French truck which took us to this little city.[11] Our dinner, en route, was "gold-fish," hard-tack and raw turnips. It seems to me all the turnips in the world must grow on these fertile fields.

Our office here faces on the public square, in the center of which is a quaint tower, with a clock and chimes, which tell the quarter-hour. The Huns took four of the chimes, but even the remnant is beautiful.

Got a hair-cut and shave in a "shop" located in a kitchen. A boy cut my hair and an old man shaved me. Worst yet; but total bill was only nine cents!

8Cruyshautem.
9Olsene.
10Dentergehm.
11Thielt.

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I am sleeping with some poor people in the factory district. No use bunking on a hard floor, with the company, when I can look out for myself. Corps. Bentley and Ben McCune with me.

Haven't seen a "Y" hut since we left Baccarat (except in Toul). All we see are canteens—no place to write, etc. All the entertainment-stuff, ice cream soda fountains, etc., are for the S. O. S. (Short of Sand) soldiers way in the rear.

The stolid Belgians are not nearly so brave as the bonny French. They shivered[8] whenever a shell landed in town—stopped talking and grew white-faced. Asked us if we were not afraid. Told them about Oct. 31st! Three bombs dropped here, way back of the lines, early in evening. Whole family ran to the Kellar or Understand and insisted that we go, too.

Of course, upon our arrival here, they offered us coffee—with plenty milk and sugar—bread and butter. The first thing in a Belgian home is "Wilst do kaffie haben?" (phonetic spelling). Our American Relief has endeared us to them. . . . . .

This war has made a fatalist of me. I don't worry. If anything is to happen, it will happen, and that's the end of it. We don't think of death or danger often. No use to worry.

The bar of chocolate in your box is splendid.[11a]

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(Letter) An old town in Flanders (Thielt),
November 7, 1918.

The 148th Band is playing the stirring Ohio song—the song men have fought by and have died with its words on their lips—silly as they may sound to you. . . . Now they play "K-K-Katie, my beautiful K-K-Katie," and:

"The old gray mare, she (kicked) o'er the whiffle-tree,
(Kicked) o'er the whiffle-tree,
(Kicked) o'er the whiffle-tree,
The old gray mare she (kicked) o'er the whiffle-tree,
Many long years ago." (Repeat.)

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11a.—When the box left America there were 20 cakes; I got one. Thanks, Burleson!

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The sun shines down on the motley allied uniforms in the old cobble-paved square, beside the quaint tower, whence the quarter-hour is now chiming musically, as the band marches away, to the world-old ruffle of drums. Oh, there is still a glamour and a romance to war, tho I cannot forget the still figures I have seen lying on the fields of France and Flanders. . . . . .

Baths? I have had one in Belgium—in the German army bath-house[12] two weeks ago. May get another in a few weeks, but they have none in this town, I guess.

Did I mention picking up a letter on the battle-field near H——[12] two weeks ago? It was near a new grave which his camarades had dug with loving care. A wooden cross, bearing the blue cap this Chausseur of France had borne so jauntily, was at the head, and flowers had been planted. Scattered nearby were a few papers. I picked up a letter, written in French, addressed to the same name as that on the cross. It was from a French mother. I read a few simple, commonplace remarks, with the love all between the lines; as to the rain he had mentioned in a letter, and that that one must expect that in Flanders at this season . . . . then I had to quit and drop it. It was too poignant for me and I could not bear to read further. . . I had seen many dead, with all the horror of war, but this simple letter left me unnerved.

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(Letter) (Thielt), Fri., Nov. 8, 1918.

McCune and Bentley have gone upstairs to our little room. The many Kleiner or Yunger are all asleep on their straw in the Kellar and the man and wife are in the next room, while I write in their combined reception-drawing-dining-room and kitchen, by candle-light, for the town's gas-system is kaput, thanks, of course, to the Germans. You know the robbers stripped the houses of all copper and brass, even door-knobs, window-catches, etc., when they left. Some of the wise natives painted their metal black, and one family built a false ceiling in a big closet, hiding valuable woolens, silks, etc.

[12]Hooghlede,

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Saw a Belgian funeral Monday. The deceased must have been a man of importance. A bugle corps of fifteen or twenty men, in civilian clothes, preceded the cortege. The corpse was borne on the shoulders of the pall-bearers. Then followed friends and the family walked in the rear.

All these people are Catholics. And how pious! Shelves and mantles are full of casts of The Christ, Mary and Joseph, etc., gaily colored; each covered with a bell-jar to protect from dust. Walls are plastered with pictures of saints, etc.

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(Letter) (Dienze), Nov. 9, 1918.

"Ours is a mobile army," say our leaders, and believe this hiker, it is true! Left T——[13] at 1 p. m. today. We gave our hostess 10 franks, although she said we owed her nothing. Of course, we brought her lots of stuff for her kitchen, sub rosa. A final lunch of bread, "butter" and real coffee and we left, with her "Wieder kommen" in our ears. The company hiked about a kilometre, then following the sensible practice tacitly permitted now in the M. P's, we fell out and separated. Mechanic John Wiethorn, Corp. Bob Reese and I stuck together. Soon we caught a Belgian truck, loaded with H. E. shells. The driver, who spoke English, told us, IF we smoked, to be careful not to drop any sparks inside, as there were detonators with the shells—and he made an impressive and expressive gesture heavenward, "if we did." We lost our taste for tobacco immediately.

This town has suffered much from the war. Main damage was done by French artillery. The Boche "parteed" a week ago yesterday—during our first drive, altho this was not our sector. The damnable robbers took furniture, bedding, food—everything. The railroad, as usual, had been destroyed by the Huns, before leaving. Saw an entire switch—four tracks and cross-ties—upreared, curved and leaning against the top of a telegraph pole.

Upon arrival Bob and I (John having unfortunately been put on post) set out at once in search of a "home." Rooms

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13Thielt.

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were very scarce, in most cases, because of one of two reasons: (1), the upper story having been blown off, or, (2), having the second floor intact, but the stairway gone. However, found this place, a large, nice-looking, white-fronted home. This room must have been used by the Germans, as it has a nice double-layer bunk, rough table and chairs. Respecting Bob's great avoirdupois, I insisted on his taking the lower bunk.

Reported back to company for a supper of cold bully-beef and hardtack, as the kitchen is "crawling" again. Saw a "Petite Parisienne" of Nov. 8th, with headings confirming the rumors that Boche officials were conferrinig with Foch on armistice.

Had coffee with our host and enjoyed a conversation with him. He is of Belgian blood, born in France, and was a contractor in the city of Lens. His pretty, intelligent wife was French. They have a bright little son, eight years old.

My heart ached as I read the lines of suffering graven on the wife's face. She seemed to have lost her spirit. Imagine yourself living in your home, with every article taken but a stove, a table and two or three chairs.

The husband told me that the war had cost him 125,000 franks. He had planned to visit two brothers in Winnipeg, Canada, who have made fortunes there, but now, he says, with quiet resignation, that is impossible. In some ways, I imagine the war has fallen most heavily on people of his class—our class—for the peasants never had much and can well afford to laugh gaily at misfortune; and the very rich, tho suffering, still live well. . . . He was wounded in five places, at once, in 1915, tho, I think, not a soldier. Had buried many English and German dead while a civilian prisoner of the Boche. We agreed heartily that this must be the last war; and that all should disarm. . . . Told me Boches took all men with them when driven out, but he hid.

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(Continued) (Crossroads between Auwegem and Syngem), Belgium, Sun., Nov. 10.

Well, it's a blue lad who writes you tonight. Our company has been all re-organized. The new Table of Organiza-

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tion—one company of 200 men—has gone into effect. (I have put on my gas-mask, as the Huns just sent over some sneeze-gas. Heard shells burst, but as we could not hear the whistle inside here, had thot them departures. It is not serious, just annoying.)

As I started to write, Brooks is no longer our "Top." Sgt. Ott, formerly of "B" Company, is First Sergeant!! Sgts. Jim Thomas and Curtis, Corps. Galigher, and Pyle, and other efficient non-coms, are transferred to "C" Co. Corps. Piott and "Hobe" Brown are promoted to Sergeant. I cannot write what I feel about Brooks and the others. You can guess. Poor Harry took it hard; could not understand it.

(Well, off with the mask. Not necessary; two of the shells landed within 100 feet, on either side, but that's all.)

Due to this sudden re(dis)organization, the company did not leave D——[14] at 8 a. m., but 1 p. m.. Reese, Bischoff and I refused to hike under Ott, waited half an hour, then caught a truck and rode three-fourths of the way here. Ran into Major C—— at L——.[15]

"What's this?" he asked, "An advance party?"

As we were quite sure we had passed the company, while riding, we assured him we were that.

"Join Capt. A—— six kilo's further up," he directed. Then he stopped me in the middle of that road, cluttered with a big fleet of baby tanks, and read me all the news of the elections, from the Chicago Tribune. "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also"!

As we hiked on, a big limousine came bowling back from the front. Bischoff, in the lead, started to salute, stopping as he recognized a big Hun seated on the front seat beside the driver. I presume he had information considered valuable. (Found out later he was the only prisoner the Division took in this drive.)

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(Continued) Crossroads, 11/11/18, 11:20 a. m.

Thank God! It is finished. The awful slaughter is over.

14Dienze.
15Lozier.

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Was awakened at 3 a. m. by one of our boys on post outside. A dispatch-rider going to the front stopped and told him that he was carrying orders from his Colonel to the Regiment, countermanding the order to go over the top at 4:30 a. m., as the armistice had been signed. Later, heard it was signed at 2 a. m.

All yesterday the French we passed cried out to us: "La guerre 'fineesh' demain," and I'll say they knew. Nine days ago two Frenchies[16] told me that it would all be over in eight to ten days.

We heard a few desultory shots from that time on—all going toward Berlin.

I walked two kilo's toward the front about 8:30 this morning; there was some firing to our left.

About 10 a. m. Chaplain Martin came up with a translation of Marshal Foch's orders to the Commander-in-Chief to cease hostilities on all fronts at 11 o'clock; and not to pass the line they were on at that hour, until further orders.

It is too wonderful to grasp; it is hard for us to believe it, yet. Eleven o'clock has come and gone and no firing is to be heard.

Lost night, before I went to bed, I stood on our post at these cross-roads awhile. An occasional white flare illumined the horizon across the river. On our left, the sky was red with a great fire—a German ammunition dump being destroyed—against which wan, leafless trees stood out in tragic silhouette. Now, thank God, the awful conflagration has been extinguished and the world can start to build a new civilization from the ruins.

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(Diary) (Syngem, Belgium), Tues., Nov. 12, 1918.

Sat up late last night, with Corp. Hi Myers, Alloway, Spear, and Bischoff, chewing the fat of our varied experiences since July 14, 1917. None of us felt elated, because it is so difficult to believe this all true.

Awoke this morning to find the sun shining. Left about 9 a. m. with Myers, arriving at Syngem about 10. We

16In Cruyshautem.

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got ourselves a room in a cafe—two doors from Orderly Room and across street from the Kitchen.

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(Letter) (Syngem), Nov. 13, 1918.
(Written in Peace.)

In the forty-seven hours since the guns have ceased their angry roar, I've been so confounded homesick I can hardly bear it. While the noise of war was in my ears, and there was work to do, I did not have time to get homesick: but since then I have been crazy.

Monday night the Froggies and Belges made merry with beaucoup du vin blanc et rouge. They shot flares and rockets and fired guns.

Papers state French families will dine Yanks on Thanksgiving Day. Gravy for the S. O. S.; but we are S. O. L.

---

(Diary) Wed., Nov. 13, 1918.

The night is frosty. Stars glimmer and the moon shines with a bit of a blur, as a faint, white mist rises from the Flanders soil. The cobble-stone street of this town—where, three nights ago, our boys were dying and German shells were shrieking and crashing—has regained its mediaeval quiet. The houses, with gaping walls and shattered roofs, look out with the reserved pride of a wounded victor. There is no sign of life abroad, except an M. P. on his post, chatting in a low voice with the Corporal of the Guard. Over this old Flemish village rings the beautiful, clear notes of an American bugle, sounding "Taps," as in the old camp days at Sheridan. Bed and lights out. The work is done; the cycle is complete.

---

(Letter) (Syngem), Nov. 12th.

Harry Thomas—"Tubby"—has changed his mind and now says he is willing to go home any way. When we landed, after he recovered from his seasickness, he asked, "How long would it take to build a bridge over the Atlantic?"

"About 90 years," was the reply.

"I'll wait!" announced Tubby, with conviction.

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And, did I ever tell you of long John Ott, a lanky, homely, draft-hoosier in our outfit? John was in Toul and a trifle zig-zag, as they say. He was found in front of a French mail-box, dropping in copper sous and pleading, "Come on out, good ol' peanuts!"

Another company story—did I write of our Irish Mess Sergeant, Terrence D. Connelley? He is a character—a race-track hanger-on, bar-tender, road-house-waiter; a fervent Catholic, a soaked-in-the-bone-anti-Prohibitionist; a British-hater and noisy Erin-go-Bragher; yet there is something in his keen Celtic wit and his warm Celtic heart that makes everyone like him. Among other things Connelley hates are niggers; and many a diatribe, in his own eloquent style did he deliver, when we were in Alabama. While we were in Baccarat, he went over to the next town to get rations, forgetting his gas-mask. This town was the Headquarters of a colored Division. A nigger M. P.—drafted, too—arrested him for being without his gas-mask. They held him prisoner two days! We can always get a rise out of Terry by referring to that episode.

Another sesame to the flood-gates of his wrath is "jam." Jam is issued a few cans at a time with each drawing of rations. The quantity is too small to serve the entire company one meal. So the cooks save it up (that is their story) until there is enough to serve. This point has been reached only a few times in the history of the war. We all know the guard on the kitchen steals a little jam; that is expected. We also know the Cooks and Mess Sergeant always have jam; but, unfortunately, the Sales Commissary sells the same brand as the issue, so the "salvaging" of jam is a hard matter to prove. Connelley and the Cooks camouflage their appropriations by loud phillipics against the "squawking" of the hungry soldiers; and aver scornfully that they don't care for jam.

There are two points certain on this great question:

(1) There are more acrid arguments and bitter feeling over this sweet stuff than anything else in the army, and,

(2) Any soldier, of high or low degree, will steal jam every chance he gets.

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Did I ever tell you a couple of stories about our political Major? It was in the Argonne drive. A certain M. P. Major was "having kittens"; so excited he hardly knew "what he was for." He came across Pvt. Kipp, riding the only remaining bicycle of the company. The Major saw him and yelled:

"Kipp! Drag every dead horse you see off the road and bury him!!"

Later, when the nightmare of getting our transport across the muddy "road" which traversed the old No-Man's-Land was riding us all, this same officer was even more beside himself. He was raving and running about, raising H—— in general. He came across a wagon drawn by four mules, stuck in the mud. The driver was doing his best to urge them on, but one particular beast seemed to be slacking. Carried away by force of habit, the Major rushed over to a M. P. nearby and roared:

"M. P., TAKE THAT MULE'S NAME!!"

The driver turned toward the Major, saluted gravely, and said:

"Sir, the mule's name is Maude."

This same Major lacks one army vice, anyway; his worst cussing is "Dad-burn it." One of the Sergeants said to him once:

"Sir, I'm afraid if you listen to the boys, you will learn to swear."

"Why, dad-burn it!" was the proud reply, "I have learned already."

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(Letter) (Thielt), Nov. 15, 1918.

I am sitting in a restaurant, back in the town where I was from November 4 to 9—the town with the tower of the chimes, you remember. This restaurant seems just like home —as I have just ordered PAN-CAKES, beefsteak and a HAM SANDWICH!! The waiters "speak English and understand American."

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Left S——[17] early this morning, walking back to A——[18] with Mechanic Wiethorn. Caught a truck to "Brooks' Headquarters" (Orderly Room of Company "C"). Saw him. Took another truck to L——[18a], our Battalion Headquarters. Got Major's O. K. on some parcel post souvenirs. A third truck to D——.[19] Ate with a Sanitary Train outfit.

I was standing on the bridge there, waiting to catch a truck for this place, when a staff limousine bowled by. The M. P. on post, and I, stiffened up to a salute. BUT—it only went about one yard past us when suddenly applied brakes brought it to an abrupt stop. I was called to the door and had quite a chat with that dearly-beloved Chief of Staff of our Division—Col. Dynamite Merrill. It seemed that he had observed on my cap a tiny tri-color of Belgium, presented to me by a girl in C——[20] when we captured that town. He inquired my name and organization and reminded me with some force that he would be under obligations to me if I could see my way clear to remove the ribbon. I complied. He suggested to me that I might transfer to the Belgian Army and he would do whatever he could to assist me. Said that it was "a disgrace for an American soldier to wear the colors" of our ally. Told me warmly that he would remember me to Major C—— (which he never did), and we parted —perhaps forever—who knows?

The old chap has a great rep. for tongue-lashing, but, frankly, I was disappointed. I looked him right in the eye (and it WAS a wicked eye) and his fulsome compliments rolled right off my hide. I am still wearing the tri-color—inside the flap of the cap.

After walking a couple of kilo's, I caught a truck which took me here—a 30-kilometre trip to mail souvenirs.

A Sergeant in the Division Post Office offered me a job there, with probable promotion. But, if Brooks is only transferred back to "A" Company, I had rather remain.

17Syngem.
18Auwegem.
18aLozier.
19Dienze.
20Cruyshautem.

It will be noted the censorship was still in effect.

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The Company Commander of "C" Company was Capt. D——, in peace-time an express-wagon driver, and, no doubt, a good one. He had been in the Infantry, and, according to very good information, had "gone yellow" in the Argonne and left the front-line on some pretext. As a result, he was slated for the S. O. S., when it was decided to form "C" Company to replace Company "B." Plans were changed and D—— was given command of the new organization.

As might be expected, he was a harsh, overbearing fellow. Yet "C" Company men tell me that, on one occasion, his old Infantry outfit passed them on a hike. Several of the doughboys cast sneering insults at him, plainly audible, yet D—— dared not say a word.

(Letter) (Syngem), Nov. 16, 1918.

Looked up my old hosts of a week or two ago (at T——[20a]). They insisted on my sleeping there. The many kids were bunked in our old room, so the wife went up and crowded in with them, while I "coucheed" in the bed in the back room with the husband. I think I told you he was a road worker, did I not? He was fairly clean, tho—and the bed was great. Soft and warm.

Well, the old boy had been celebrating "La Victoire" by drinking wine, last evening, and an hour or so after we had retired he leaned over HIS side of the bed and—WHOOOP! I just laid there and pretended to sleep. A little thing like that did not keep me awake long.

Coffee and bread, this morning, then started out on my return. Cold! Caught a truck, with three or four Belgian civilians, headed for Ghent, four or five Belgian and three or four French soldiers. Two of the first-named managed English pretty well. One lad of 20 had been a civilian prisoner, fed on weak chicory-water and three small pieces of bread per day. . . . . .

20a.—Thielt.

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The town-crier here resembles his French cousin, but favors a bell in place of the drum. . . . . .

Here is a letter one of the boys in the company actually sent home:

"Dear Mother:
"I have the cooties. Did you ever have them?"

Capt. A—— tells me that this town and one other are the only corporations in West Flanders in which the village Priest is not also the Burgemeester. Five of seven million Belgians are Catholic.

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(Letter) (Oombergen), Nov. 18, 1918.

Billeted in a room of a Convent. We have straw on the floor, a stove and—wonder of wonders!—an unbroken pair of windows.

"Hi" and I started out from S——[17] about 9 a. m. It required a little diplomacy to avoid marching with the company; but what it takes for diplomacy, we're all broken out with. The company morale is all shot to pieces since Brooks and the others were taken out, and orders are the last thing we worry about. We feel Captain A—— also is disgusted with the orders, although he keeps his own counsel. We did not have the slightest idea where the company had gone, or what town was the objective of the day's hike. So I asked that oeuf Ridenour if he knew what town they were headed for. "I can't pronounce it," he said, "but I saw it on a sign—it is spelled "E, S, T, A, M, I, N, E, T" ("Saloon.")

The first snow of the winter was falling as we started. It was exhilarating to hike out over the hard roads, with the snowflakes sifting down on us. But about 10 a. m. it changed to rain. We went on at our own pace, stopping whenever "Hi's" blistered feet or my sore shoulder required it.

About noon stopped at a peasant's home, where they allowed us, of course, to heat a can of corn-beef-hash on their stove.

In the afternoon, "Hi" and I were sitting on a log, resting, with our canes sticking up in front of us, when Lt. Col. Bargar, Division Inspector, came up in his car and stopped. Said he: "Do you know the orders for canes?"

---

17 Syngem.

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We told him we did not; and he talked to us a bit in a quiet, gentlemanly way, and advised us we'd better get rid of them.

We walked on 100 yards to a cross-roads, where Pvt. Kennett was standing post. He remarked: "Gee, I'd like to buy your cane!"

I sold it to him at once!

---

(Continued) (Borsbeke), Nov. 20, 1918.

We hung around at O——,[21] twelve or fifteen of us "whom 1st Sgt. Ott forgot," all yesterday morning. We had no orders to move, though we knew that the rest of the company had gone on to this town.[21a] (They say one "C" Co. detail Ott posted during the first Belgian drive, November 1st, were just found recently.) Finally we decided to go on. "Hi" and I journeyed together, meeting Bob Reese near this town. Bob it was who went out and found this billet, tho we were not "supposed" to rent rooms.

We have a little room, with straw on the stone floor. We spent all morning about the Belgian stove in the kitchen. I was reading; Reese, the red-headed giant, sewing dinky buttons on his clothes, while lanky "Hi" Myers silently watched our host working at his Singer sewing machine, or sitting on his table cross-legged, in old-age tailor fashion. The Mademoiselle was busy at her spinning-machine, a crude spool and arm affair, operated by a foot-treadle. She takes the wool and strings it out into a thread, feeding the machine, which winds it on a spool. This afternoon she has three spools on the machine, braiding them into yarn.

Played "500" with Reese, Bischoff and Bentley.

Corp. Myers got orders today to escort three prisoners back to Amiens, France; and departed.

---

21 Oombergen.
21a Borsbeke.

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Major Generals in the A. E. F. had important duties, some of them being vegetarian, as the following official communication will evidence:

Hdqrs. 37th Division,
American E. F.,
19 November, 1918.

Memorandum to C. C., Co. A, 112th Military Police:

1. Pvt. Geo. Bechtold, No. 1539788, was arrested by Col. Bargar 18 November, 1918, for stealing turnips. The Division Commander directs that you report whether or not Private Bechtold should be relieved from duty with the Military Police and that you take necessary disciplinary measures if the man was stealing turnips.

(Signed) C. S. Farnsworth,
Major General, U. S. A.

Borsbeke was the farthest into Belgium for us. Up to this point, we were hiking toward Brussels, as it was planned to have the 37th reviewed there by the King. But something went wrong, and the plans were changed, so that only a few were picked from the Infantry outfits to represent the Division. The rest of us had to march back whence we came.

(Diary) (Gavere), Thurs., Nov. 21.

Succeeded in escaping 1st Sgt. Ott, who raked up only sixteen men of the entire company to march with him.

Corp. Bob Reese, Bischoff and I marched out, in company front, at 8:45 a. m. Threw our packs on French pontoon wagon and walked alongside. Passed thru Hillegem again and Oombergen, then a town called Velsique. Ate dinner of three eggs, each, scrambled, coffee and bread, at a roadside In. Proceeded thru Hundelgem, Beirlegem, Dickelvenne to Gavere. Did not find company here.

Got a scanty meal from the Signal Corps. Great trouble to find billets. Got one with poor people, who put straw on their living-room floor for our bed.

---

(Diary) Thielt, Fri., Nov. 22.

Left about 8:30 this morning; sunny but cold. Ice in the ditches was unmelted by 1 p. m. Crossed river there on pontoon-bridge.

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At noon, stopped at a former wayside cafe. Were given a meal of boiled potatoes, Chicago beef (C. R. B.), etc. When we finished we asked the host the bill; and he said "Nothing"! Upon our pressing him, he said we could give the children a few sous if we wished. Bob Reese had an American dollar bill, so we three gave him that. He asked us, "Is that not too much, messieurs?"

On to Dienze. There caught a French truck, which, with its solid tires on the cobble-stone roads gave us a rough ride to Thielt.

Went to my old friends there. Warm welcome. Beaucoup pommes de terre frites, cafe au lait et du pain, avec beurre. Occupied the old room upstairs, with two beds.

Co. "A" is not here, as we figured it would be, but we don't care. We're touring Europe on our own. Saw Capt. Tom Jones. Division Billeting Officer, who advised us as follows: "Stay here. Shoot! The war's over."

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(Letter) Hooge, Sun., Nov. 24.

Well, here I am, in a bed-chamber of a Catholic Convent at this tiny place, having found my long-lost company after three and one-half days' absence.

Caught a French "street-car" truck out of Thielt (censorship is lifted) and rode to Pitthem. There we soon caught another French truck which took us, thru Ardoye and Beveren, to Roulers, a large town. Badly shattered. An affable Australian told us that often, during a night-guard on the railroad, he hears the crash of a falling wall or entire house. Roulers is only a few kilo's from Hooghlede.

The company had not come here. Fooled again.

Aided by a Belgian soldier, we found a "home." Slept eleven hours.

Caught the "9 a. m. train" on the road, (which is run by "Aussies") riding, of course, in a box-car. In a few minutes we arrived at Isegem, another large town. Had been told the company was there. Not there. Were about to return to Roulers, when we saw Sgt. Ott, who told us the outfit was some three kilo's from town, in this hamlet.

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When the Company Clerk arrived he was greeted casually by the Company Commander, without inquiry as to his absence. Excuses saved.

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(Letter) Hooge, Nov. 26, 1918.

Company was reorganized yesterday, with Brooks reenthroned as Top Sergeant. He is on his way to join us. Ott will take his job of 1st Sergeant of "C" Company.

Another reorganization took place this afternoon; busts, promotions and transfers.

The reorganization of the M. P's, on November 10th, when Brooks and other excellent non-commissioned officers were transferred to "C" Company (and some of them reduced), was the crowning bit of imbecility committed by the Major. In this he was advised and influenced by Capt. I——, Medic.

Brooks was transferred ostensibly as being under A. E. F. height regulations but really because he was too good. Captain A—— was disgusted with this child's play. Of course, he never uttered a word, but his attitude was apparent.

This same reorganization of Division M. P's from two companies of 150 men each to one company of 200 men automatically "deprived" us of our idolized Major; but like a good politician, he hung on to his job, although A——should have been Commanding Officer. C—— was appointed Division Historian and spent his time on that until he was transferred to the 145th Regiment—in January, I believe. However A—— had the power to get Brooks and others back, which he wisely exercised at the earliest opportunity.

(Letter) Hooge, THANKSGIVING DAY,
Nov. 28, 1918.

Laws-a-Massy, Buddie; I don't like to squawk, but gee whiz! This is a h—— of a Thanksgiving Day! We fared better than many of the boys, having steak, mashed potatoes,

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plain bread and unembellished coffee. Lined up in the cheerless rain, in the muddy courtyard of this Convent, to get it.

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(Letter) Hooge, Belgium, Dec. 1, 1918.

It is almost impossible to believe the stories of our boys with the C. R. A. (Commission Regulation Automobiles) and others who got to Brussels when Albert re-entered. They simply could not spend a cent. Some mistook them for English at first, but when they said they were Americans, everything was theirs. They came back without any buttons on their blouses.

One lad got lost and a civilian, instead of merely directing him, walked with him, a round-trip of nine miles for the latter.

Privates from the Buckeye Division sat at tables in the cafes with French Generals, who were neglected.

Every girl on the street, good, bad or indifferent, wanted to walk or talk with them; and as soon as they stopped to talk, a crowd collected to gaze at them.

An interesting upshot of the Victory Celebration in Brussels was the marriage of Madamoiselle Berthe Wegman of that city to Sgt. Carl ("Daddy") Huber of our company. This happy event took place Nov. 17, 1919 and Madame Huber says she likes Dayton, Ohio, every bit as much as Brussels.

(Continued)

The boys I feel the worst about are those knocked off the night before the Armistice. Dick Sommers, formerly a Corporal of this outfit, who transferred to the Infantry just before that, tells of being in company formation in the streets of Syngem, the "jumping-off place" for the drive which never took place, while Hun shells found them. Two or three men of his company were killed and five or six wounded. Their Captain forbade a man leaving ranks to aid the suffering; and MADE them sing. It was a terrible strain on morale.

Dick says they just "drank in" cigaret after cigaret. Boys who had been over the top twice before said that waiting was much worse.

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The only M. P's to get wound-stripes were Pvt. Wilking of "A" Co. and Pvt. "Dugan" of "C" Co. Wilking received a splinter on the chin from an aerial bomb dropped in Staden—twenty miles back of us.

Old "Dugan" was doing traffic duty in Cruyshautem when Fritzie sent over a shell. He dropped flat on the cobble-stones, face down. A fragment struck him in that portion of the anatomy usually reserved for seating purposes, giving him two or three week's rest in hospital.

Bill Seibert was said to be gassed in the Argonne, but never applied for a wound-stripe.

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## NORTHERN FRANCE

(Letter) Hondschoote, France,
Dec. 7, 1918.

BACK in France again, though only two or three kilo's from the border.

Left Hooge Wednesday morning, the 4th. Marched thru Roulers and back to Hooghlede. It was wrecked even a bit worse than before, due to air-raids by the Boche and stealing by the Froggies. Our orders were to make Hooghlede our stopping point, but as we arrived at 10:30 a. m., Brooks, on Capt. A——'s orders, took company on toward Staden. I fell out to fix my pack, which was showing signs of disintegrating. Ed Bentley stopped with me. Just as we were starting on, C—— drove up in his limousine and asked, in his pleasant way, what we were doing there. Told him. Asked me why company was going on to Staden. I stated my total ignorance of the reason. He drove on, in a fine rage, overtaking the boys and making them hike back to Hooghlede. Slept there that night.

Up Thursday morning, the 5th, at 7, before daylight. Seven of us loaded the company's rolls in a truck and rode, again traversing the desolate area of ravaged Belgium, but by another road; passing thru wrecked Staden, demolished Westrozebeke, Poellcapelle, Langemarck, Bezzilgem, damaged Elverdinge, slightly injured Poperinghe, untouched Proven to Rousbrugge. There I at length found a billeting officer who directed us to our billets—barracks outside of town. "Hi" Myers, Cramer, Britton and I unloaded packs, salvaged a stove and cleaned up.

Company arrived at 5, after a 42-kilo hike (over 26 miles) on shell-torn, rough and muddy roads, in nine hours; about seven hours' marching time; an average of 4¼ miles an hour.

Slept on usual wire bunks, but with straw. Washed in a sort of ditch or stream of clean-looking water.

Major C—— did pull one clever stunt, mean as it was, on this hike. Announced that men unable to walk could ride

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in his limousine. Half the company swore they couldn't go a step further. He filled the car with them and they drove off, full of glee.

But not to Rousbrugge! At each cross-roads the Major dropped one of them, for traffic-duty. Returning to the outfit, he got two more loads, mostly "gold-brickers."

These birds had the pleasure of standing post while the grinning company plodded past; and stand post they did, till 12 o'clock that night.

Yesterday, the 6th, did not get up till 9:30. Then waited for breakfast till 2 p. m.

Brooks woke us up at 5:30 today, but it was 8:45 before we hiked out; in heavy marching order. However, it was only about ten kilo's to Hondschoote. Corp. Henkel and I found a room, above a cafe, as the company billets were worse than usual. Cramer and "Buck" Romohr occupy another feather-bed in the same room. It will cost only ½ franc each per day.

I am writing this at a beer-table in "our" cafe. Two middle-aged civilians are drinking stout at the tiny bar, with the pleasant Madame tending. Two Belgian soldiers are sitting before the blue-porcelain stove, drinking wine and chatting with the plump Madamoiselle. There are also two young girls, 12 to 15 years old, one of whom has just been showing Parr her postal-album. It is a quiet, genial atmosphere. If American saloons were only like these European drinking places!

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(Diary) Hondschoote, Sun., Dec. 8, 1918.

Beautiful day. But we feel very blue. Got order to turn in a requisition for all transport material (which we never had during fighting). Looks like Germany for us.[1] Also order for A—— and Brooks to report to M. P. School.

Thanks to Stanley Brown, the Captain's Orderly, rode A——'s horse for a short, brisk trot and gallop, putting new life in my veins and driving out the moodiness. The Captain's mount is a noble animal.

[1]Never understood this order. The equipment thus requisitioned was never issued.

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Altho we were supposed to be mounted, we never had more than a dozen or fifteen horses, including draft animals. There was finally evolved one mounted squad, among whom, as I recall it, were Clif Lawrence, Bob Gillis, George King, Anderson, Harry Thomas, Hobe Brown, Tip O'Neil, Al Meyer, and others from time to time.

Tubby Thomas' mount, "a strawberry roan with a moth-eaten face," he nominated "Jenny-Say-Pa," or more correctly, "Je ne sais pas." He had much entertainment in answering queries as to the meaning of this name by replying, truthfully, "I do not know."

The boys became very deeply attached to their animals. Private So-and-So (whose name I suppress), returning from an evening at a cafe, where he had imbibed beaucoup cognac, was discovered anointing his mount freely with French perfume which he had bought for that purpose at 25 francs a bottle.

(Diary) Mon., Dec. 9.

Parr, Cort, Kipp, Harry Thomas, Alloway, Henkel, Piott, Cramer and I had an evening lunch of sardines, herrings, cheese, pickles, etc. The rest of them put over a beer-barrage, of some twenty or thirty rounds each. It is so light that there were no casualties whatever. Sang from 6:30 to 9 p. m.

---

(Diary) Tues., Dec. 10.

Harry Thomas, Alloway, Parr, Cort, Kipp, Johnny Weithorn, Cramer, Corp. (ex-Sgt.-Maj.) Judy and I had French-fried potatoes, beefsteak, cheese and the Madame's inimitable Salade du Blé; then the boys put over a champagne barrage unequalled in the history of the company. Several casualties. One of the boys had great difficulty in climbing the ladder to his billet above the company stable. After he had

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fallen off twice, some one awoke and asked him what was the trouble.

"This darned ladder is crooked!" he exclaimed indignantly.

---

(Letter) Hondschoote, Dec. 10, 1918.

The Battery Boys? Nonsense! "Cut off and killed." . . Perhaps their hair was cut off and their cooties killed—that's all. I can show you 150 of our humble M. P's who were in greater danger than the artillerymen. The Battery Boys were safer than truck-drivers; even if they did ever reach any front. They did NOT parade in Brussels, having never even entered Belgium before or after the Armistice.

---

(Letter) Hondschoote, Dec. 11, 1918.

Read the enclosed brief, eloquent congratulations from Foch to the soldiers of the Allied Armies. I am proud to have served under him:

G. Q. G. A. le 12 Novembre 1918.

Officiers, Sous-Officiers. Soldats des Armees Alliees:

Apres avoir resolument arrete l'ennemi, vous l'avez, pendant des mois, avec une foi et une energie inlassables, attaque sans repit.

Vous avez gagne la plus grande bataille de l'Histoire et sauve la cause la plus sacree; la Liberte du Monde.

Soyez fiers!

D'une gloire immortelle vous avez pare vos drapeaux.

La Posterite vous garde sa reconnaissance.

La Marechal de France,
Commandant en Chef les Armees Alliees,
F. FOCH.

(Translation)

Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, Soldiers of the Allied Armies:

After having firmly held the enemy, you have, for some months, with untiring energy and unswerving faith, attacked him without ceasing.

You have won the greatest battle of History and saved that most sacred principle: the Liberty of the World.

Be proud!

With an immortal glory you have wreathed your flags.

Posterity will treasure your memory.

Had a West Pointer issued this order, he would have added:

"Paragraph 2: You will dress neatly at all times; never unbuttoning a button; polish your unpolishable shoes; salute all officers within sight, hearing or suspicion; refrain from

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smiling, as this might annoy our defeated enemies; drill 12 hours a day for the next war; and do not discuss the reputed victory, or your possible return to America, for that is weakening to your morale."

---

(Letter) Dec. 12, 1918.

The Chief of Staff has started to "ride" the M. P's because about 95% of them got gloriously and disgracefully zig-zag on our recent pay. Several got in trouble—fighting and shooting up the town, and such like innocent amusements. Rigid inspection this a. m. Drill daily.

---

(Letter) Oh, yes; I am STILL at Hondschoote, 15 Dec., 1918.

The Censorship still forbids our telling about the drink-and-women question over here. I have read several magazine articles, saying the writers never saw an American soldier drunk, in all France. Our Commanding General got out an order not long ago, in which he said he was "disagreeably surprised" at "seeing one man drunk and hearing about another being drunk." Well, amusing literature is scarce.

By the way, isn't this a funny world? Remember stories of men advancing into the Valley of Death with these words on their lips:

"We are fighting to end war."

"This shall be the last war."

"We die now, that our children may have peace."

"We are not fighting Germany, but the Spirit of Militarism."

No, that wasn't funny; especially if you realize that those men meant it. . . . Especially if you saw their shattered bodies. . . . or their dead bodies. . . . No, that is not the rich humor of it.

The joke is a great one, I assure you. Old Beelzebub is cracking his infernal ribs with hellish glee. Now that the Hun has been conquered, France and even Belgium are getting ready to grab. America and England are vying to build the greatest fleet. America plans Universal Military Training.

What for? What for, indeed, if not for another war? Ain't this a funny world; now, ain't it?

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(Diary) Mon., Dec. 16.

Galigher, John Wiethorn, Hobe Brown and I, with Francis from "Bn. Hq." took truck to Dunquerque, on 12-hour pass. Passed thru Bergues, a quaint town, surrounded with ancient wall and moat. One must cross a drawbridge to enter and leave. Francis and I wandered about Dunquerque, looking over the wharves. Saw a submarine at dock. Ate (?) at British Salvation Army. Good tub-bath at Public Baths. Took first car-ride in six months.

Saw an American ship, the "Defiance." Built by the Yankees in 28 days; arrived in Dunquerque on her maiden voyage, and has been lying there 31 days waiting for the French to unload her! Voilà!

Returned on truck at 8 p. m. Found orders to move.

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(Letter) Wormhoudt, France, 17 Dec., 1918.

We left Hondschoote at 8 a. m. today, our packs being carried. "Buck" Romohr, Bill Galigher and I conducted our private march thru Killem, Rexopede and Wylder, cutting off some distance by hitting railroad ties. Seventeen kilo hike.

This is not a bad town, but the company billets (round-roofed British huts) are rotten. So Sgts. Hobe Brown, Piott, Corp. Judy, "Buck" Romohr and I finally got a chambre. It's a tiny room, with two tiny beds.

Just had an annoying interruption. An English Town-Major is in charge of the town. This place was on his list and was assigned to a Sergeant-Major and a Private from Division Headquarters. An English private from his office, with an American Captain, and the private assigned here, came to arrange for the room. The young woman went to the door and lied loyally, saying her brother was home on leave, etc., etc. But the Tommy, in a nasty manner, forced her to admit them. The American Captain and soldier were very decent, but if ever I wanted to smack a man it was that little, sawed-off Cockney.

"Pack up your kit and move out," he ordered me.

Strange to say, this Yank (with English blood) did not obey.

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He threatened to call the M. P's. He didn't know how droll that threat was.

"Listen to me," I began.

He interrupted, "Listen—wait till I get thru."

I replied, "Wait till I get thru. I take no orders from you. You belong to the wrong army to give me orders; and I outrank you, anyway. If an American Sergeant or officer gives me orders, I will be glad to obey them."

Well, the Yank intervened and we arranged a compromise. He and the Sergeant-Major will take one of the two beds, two of us the other, and two others will sleep on a tick on the floor in the attic, outside the room.

---

(Letter) Wormhoudt, France, 22 Dec., 1918.

Did you ever watch a French horse-shoer at work? He runs his business on Safety-First principles. He puts the animal in a narrow stall, with a bar, perhaps two feet from the ground, at the rear end. Passing a rope around one foot, the horse-shoer raises it and ties it to the bar; then works from the lee side of this protection. He nails on the heavy shoe, then makes the hoof fit the shoe.

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(Letter) Wormhoudt, Dec. 22, 1918.

Yes; I understand your natural sympathy for the "Germans who sorrow at home."

But, remember, these were the women who spat in the faces of English and American prisoners, hurling vile epithets at them. These were the women who begged their Soldaten to steal and send to them French and Belgian loot. These were the women (God forgive them) who held a Teutonic holiday when the Lusitania sank in the cold Irish Sea. These were the women who thanked a Prussian Gott for the successes of Hunnish vultures who dropped death on French and English women and children. . . . . .

Don't burden the Y. M. C. A. with contributions. After the war was over the boys of our Division hoped, with safety assured, to see more of their work. What did they do? Hiked to Paris and have been there ever since—five or six

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weeks. An attempt has been made to run a Your Money Cheerfully Accepted canteen here, with enlisted men taking their places, but they are greatly handicapped.

Just had my teeth looked over by Pvt. Fitzpatrick of the M. C. He was a dentist in New York, with a good practice. Tried to get a commission two or three times, but was rejected each time, on account of flat feet. When the draft came along, they took him—flat feet didn't make any difference then. There is a 1st Lieutenant of the Dental Corps attached to us—a good-looking, lazy, worthless hound, who has not done a stroke of work since we left Baccarat, and very little there. He draws the big pay. Buck Private Fitzpatrick does the work.

BULLETIN: Just got a letter from you, postmarked Toledo, Sept. 9; reaching me in just 95 days.

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(Letter) Christmas, 1918,
9:45 p. m.

Well, thank heavens, Christmas is over.

The morning's rain turned into a snow sufficient to coat the trees and house-tops, and to remind one of home. And when I stepped into the Y. M. C. A., with its attempt at holiday festooning, I'll tell you it brought a pang of home-sickness.

I saw the Red Cross people yesterday and got a few packages of cigarets and tobacco for some of the boys. Had our officers been interested, they could have secured something for each man. The Y.M. did give us a nice present—mine was a corn-cob pipe, P. A., Humps, Benos, chocolate and crackers.

Our Christmas dinner was tough steak, tomatoes, half-mashed potatoes, bread, coffee. It will say "turkey" in the papers.

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(Letter) Wormhoudt, Dec. 30, 1918.

Dear wife, I have a confession to make; something I boasted I would never have to write you. It is something I would never have done back home. I realize it should unfit me to live with a woman like you; but I come to you know-

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ing that in you I always find forgiveness. This afternoon I succumbed; I finally gave in to the irresistible impulse; and, taking off my shirt, found thereon a COOTIE!!!

This was my first offense. Changed underwear, threw away my knit jersey and declared a war of extermination.

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(Letter) December 30th, 1918.

I note Pershing's boom for the Presidency has been started. NEVER! Bad enough to have these autocrats in an army; but we can't have them bring their infernal "implicit" obedience to "superiors" and social-caste ideas into civil life. J. J. P. has functioned efficiently as C. in C. of the A. E. F.; but in my humble opinion, is no military genius. He hasn't "won the war"; nor is he, in any particular individual sense, a Hero. We admire him for his successful, business management of the Amex Forces. But vote for him? Never!!

Speaking of army officers in politics reminds me of the so-called "Iron Rations" issued by Division Headquarters. So-called, because so common and so little esteemed. It was a list citing those who had performed specially meritorious and valuable work; Maj. C—— was included, while Capt. A——, who did his brain-work for him (as I happen to know, from my work), was omitted. This list was a joke, as it contained thousands of names out of the Division. Still, it will make good campaign material.

Had an awful time, trying to leave the billet-area tonight. Owing to the mud and rain, the only possible way of walking was on the narrow duck-boards. It was pitch-dark. First I would slip off one side into the deep muck, then off the other into the heavy mire. Then I'd stumble over breaks in the walk. One slides off a duck-board like water off a duck's back; hence the name. The walk took a turn which I had forgotten and I walked off into the quagmire—lost! If a fellow with a flashlight had not happened along, I might have been there till dawn.

There is a strong rumor that Herb Miller and Don Smith have married French girls at Bergues. Donald states that it is entirely without foundation,

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(Diary) January 1, 1919.

Today the General announced officially that the Division embarks for home January 30th.

The dope that we would sail December 29th is not believed so generally at it was. Huh!

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(Letter) Wormhoudt, Jan. 1, 1919.

The people here have a strange custom in case of death. The entire front door is covered with a black and white curtain. Across the top is a wide strip, bearing a white cross. At each side hang black curtains, with white edges, bound back with white cord. There are at present seven such doors in this town of 3,500 souls—five from La Grippe.

January 2, 1919, Corporal Henkel, who had left us at Hondschoote on a prisoner-escort trip to Is-sur-Tille, returned to the company. He had overstayed by twelve hours, a twenty-four hour pass in Paris, that he might see President Wilson; and had been arrested, sent to the "Bastile" (so-called) and then to the prison-farm at Schelles, under the infamous Lieut. "Hardboiled" Smith. The guards who received him confiscated 150 francs' worth of newly-purchased souvenirs to their own use.

Henkel was in dreadful physical shape when he returned and it took two or three weeks of rest and good food to restore him to normal condition.

The food in prison was mostly "slum," coffee and sometimes bread; but never in sufficient quantity. The prisoners worked interminably long hours, in mud sometimes knee-deep. They were allowed no tobacco, even during "leisure" hours.

The guards, who had never seen the Front, prided themselves on being "hard." Time and again Corp. Henkel saw men struck down when they did not run for formation. If they uttered a word of protest they were brutally beaten.

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He says he heard men who had volunteered for their country's defense and had been imprisoned for some trivial misdeed, curse the Flag.

(Letter) Wormhoudt, Jan. 5, 1919.

Rain, rain, and still, rain.

Rain on the mud-veneered cobblestones. Rain on the red-tiled cottage roofs. Noisy rain on the curved tin roofs of the shacks where once Britain's cootieful hosts encamped. Silent rain soaking into the oozy mud, long past the point dividing wet earth from muddy water.

Rain shining on the great, fat crows in the plashy meadowlands. Rain swelling the little river back of our home.

Rain yesterday, rain today and tomorrow—rain. Rain, rain, rain.

Capt. A—— and 1st Sgt. Brooks returned January 2nd from M. P. School.

About 3:30 Friday afternoon, the 3rd, Henkel, "Buck" Romohr and I went on a little leave. We walked 4.5 kilometres to Herzeele. Had been told that a narrow-gauge train left there at 5 p. m. daily, for Hondschoote. Upon arriving, at 4:15, found it did not leave till 7. So we found an estaminet, hoping to get supper there.

It was similar to the usual affair; its dingy walls covered with legal regulations and restrictions and with sales-bills, very like our own rural specimens. Several worm-eaten stuffed birds also decorated the place. A billiard-table and a piano evidenced an unusual prosperity.

As we entered, the piano was rattling in a lively manner, and a fat, grandfatherly man, with gray mustaches and goatee was dancing with a plump matron of forty. They held each other in a peculiar, close and intense style, making innumerable and dizzying turns. As they danced, the music rattled faster and faster, and the old rascal became gayer and gayer, planting kisses on the Madame's left cheek, then on her right, and finally on her lips; all to the entertainment of four or five French soldiers who were watching.

The music stopped and I saw that the player was an unusually neat and pretty girl, about 16 years old. The old

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boy must kiss her too, since her mother had retired behind a tiny bar to pour out more beer from the enamel pitcher. When he left, we approached the Madamoiselle on the subject of chow. She spoke almost perfect English.

"You see," she said, "that ees my oncle and he ees just a leetle droonk, now."

They no longer served meals, it seemed, since the war was over, and her mother was very tired.

However, our combined eloquence elicited a promise to ask her Maman. The latter complied, and it was not long before we were summoned into a dining room and served French frieds, steak, bread and cheese—and plenteously. She charged us only three francs each, which we felt very reasonable.

The restaurant was four or five blocks from the train; and it was three minutes to train time when we left. Just as we started we heard the cow-horn used by French railway conductors and the resounding shrill of the locomotive. So we ran, almost in despair.

But, on our arrival, we found the dimly-lit cars lying quietly before the Gare, while the engine was putting in spare time switching freight-cars.

We found a "first-class" compartment at one end of a "second-class" car. In five or ten minutes the little engine rejoined us, the conductor blew his horn again, and we were off, tearing thru the darkness at the breathless rate of six miles an hour.

There were four seats in our compartment, quite soft, with dirty cloth headpieces. It was not long before the Chef du Train entered, assuming an expectant air; pretending that this time he would collect a fare from these Yanks. I suppose every Chef du Train in France has had that ambition, just as people used to yearn to ascend an unclimbed Alpine peak.

We had slipped on our good old M. P. brassards in anticipation of his call; and finally Henkel, perceiving him there, explained, with dignity, "Militaire service, monsieur."

The old boy wanted papers, so Henkel showed him a typewritten order with beaucoup signatures and rubber-

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stamps thereon. (It was his order to proceed from Dunkirk to Is-sur-Tille, with a prisoner.) Your average Frog respects a rubber-stamp or a seal just a little bit more than anything else in the world. However, this con tried to tell us "Ce ne vaut rien de tout" ("That ain't worth a darn"). To this we all replied was "No comprit," and he soon saw that he was not fated to realize that impossible ambition (to collect fare from an Amex soldier on a Frog railway), so he changed tactics.

Said he, in a fierce tone, "Vous n'êtes pas des Officiers—allez!"

"Nous sommes Sous-Officiers," I replied with dignity, but that impressed him not at all.

He repeated his "Allez, toute-de-suite," pointing to the second-class section. We kidded him awhile, but he got so mad and talked so loud that at last Henkel took a leisurely reconnaissance of the rest of the car. As he found three adjacent seats, we finally obeyed the potentate.

At each village the engine left us and did a little job-switching of cars, for ten or twenty minutes, then on we rushed thru the night; at times making ten miles an hour. We made the thirteen kilo's from Herzeele to Hondschoote in an hour or an hour and a quarter. That is about seven miles an hour average.

Arriving, we were surprised to find the old "Cafe à la Gare du Nord" crowded with French and American soldiers. Learned a French division was occupying the town. The Americans, thirty of them, were a S. S. U. unit of ambulance drivers, attached to the Frog division. Their Ford ambulances, as well as themselves, were lavishly decorated with Croix de Guerre.

We traveled all over the old town, searching for better rooms, but everything was taken. A French General had the house where we had had our Orderly Room! We returned to the cafe. Slept in my old bed. A Polish Jew, from the University of Chicago, a very artistic creature, speaking English, French, Flemish, German and Polish, occupied the other bed.

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The fellows were fine lads, and at 9 a. m. insisted on our having a breakfast of rice, bacon and coffee with them. Well-cooked. Then the Madame found some eggs—four apiece—which topped off the meal first-rate. Henkel and I played "500" with two of these men all morning. We had to refuse their invitation to mess with them, for we had made the trip mainly to eat the Madame's cooking once more.

At 1 p. m. we sat down to a potage, largely composed of cabbage. Then her toothsome French fried potatoes, excellent steak, the memorable Salade de Blé, bread, coffee and cheese.

At 3.25 we took the train back. There were many soldiers from this division—French Zouaves—en route to Dunkirk. They wear an O. D. uniform with scarlet cap—very neat.

At 4:30 we arrived at Bergues, the ancient town with the moat and draw-bridge. While we were waiting for the train for Esquelbecq, a truck came along, which took us direct to Wormhoudt.

It was a dark, rainy night and our "home" looked good. After a lunch, Galigher informed me that there was mail at the Orderly Room for Henkel and me. After some discussion, we dealt a cold poker hand to decide who should go for it. I lost.

Out I went in the rain and mud. I have already described to you the slippery, the broken, the slanting, the inundated, and—may I not say?—the hiatic duck-boards. So you can picture me slipping and sliding and stumbling and straying from, on or near them; lighting match after match to find them, in that liquid darkness.

When I arrived at the Orderly Room, Shorty Bishop told me Brooks had taken my mail! How I cussed that little, sawed-off Top!

No one could tell me where his room was; no one in the billet, or the billet next door, or the medic's shack, or the mess-shack. In the latter place I was told the Mess Sergeant knew. I emerged from Camp Mire and, after waking two or three French families, found the Mess Sergeant. He

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told me just how to find Brooks' room. I discovered today that he gave me the wrong number; but, inasmuch as I got on the wrong street, that did not make material difference. I woke up either six or seven more families, but didn't find H. A. B. As I had used up all the matches I had (three boxes), I was forced to quit. . . . . I was mighty mad when, at 9:30, after one and a half or two hours, I returned, wet, tired and muddy. . . . . Maybe you can get from this an idea of what home-mail meant to us. . . . . .

To properly conclude this incident, will say that this morning I learned that Harry never took the letters with him. He put them in the field-desk. Bishop was the egg who gummed the works.

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(Letter) Wormhoudt, Jan. 8, 1919.

After a little time at cards last evening, Henkel, Galigher, Romohr and I went to the Grand Place for the Grand Fête. The Y. M. C. A. was showing "Huckleberry Finn" on an outdoor screen. But a greater attraction was the 50-piece band of the 164ieme Infantrie Français. They seated themselves on benches beneath a few electric bulbs strung between the trees. Fortunately, the night was quite mild.

There was one section of trumpeters, under a sort of subleader. When ready for the trumpets, he would thrust forth his big brass instrument, which bore a pennant, as a warning signal. Then they would all follow suit, give the trumpets a sort of double twirl and burst into the harmony. It was very snappy. Among many selections this excellent band played "Stars and Stripes," "Madelon," and, of course, the "Marseillaise" and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

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(Letter) Alençon, Orne—(Concentration Area), January 14, 1919.

Sunday, the 12th, we walked to Esquelbecq (of course, NOT with the Company), about 3½ kilometres. Very short hike, but with my pack, the heaviest it has ever been, and with a bad cold, I got so dizzy I nearly fell over. We ar-

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rived at the Gare about 7:15 p. m. We were only five hours ahead of the scheduled departure! Y. M. served hot chocolate, for which may their sins be forgiven them.

The train was scheduled to start at 12:07 a. m. . . No, it did not. BUT, at 2:17 a. m., an engine was hitched on. Oh, no; we did not go then; but at 3:20 we pulled out. If we had been eight hours late, we would have just caught that train! What a disgrace it would be to miss a French train!

Well, it was a pretty tough ride, in the old cattle-cars. Both Henkel and I felt rotten. I coughed considerably. Had a fever and chills, but kept it to myself.

Passed thru Dunkirk, Calais, Boulougne, etc., to Amiens. At Noyelle, a big British base, we stopped an hour while our kitchen—a Rolling Kitchen at last—lashed to a flat-car, dispensed hot rice, beans and coffee. Luxuries on a train-movement.

From Amiens we passed thru the great railroad center of Rouen, on the Seine. After traveling Sunday night, and all Monday, the 13th, we arrived at Alençon about 10 a. m. today, Tuesday, the 14th.

It is now 7 p. m. Henkel is still sleeping. We went to bed right after noon, as we were exhausted. I could not sleep after 4.

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## EMBARKATION AREA

(Letter) Alençon, Orne, Jan. 16, 1919.

OUR "home" here is the best we've had overseas. In the first place, our room is large and airy. Our bed is ample and soft. But in our hostess we have found a veritable foster-mother. Tuesday she insisted on applying a home-made mustard-plaster to my chest; and on bringing both of us hot lemonades in bed. Brought us coffee in bed Wednesday morning. That night she put some brown liquid on my neck and chest, covering it with cotton-batting; serving more hot coffee. This morning she brought me a cup of hot milk (bien sucrée).

Went over to a First Lieutenant of the M. C., who sprayed my throat and gave me some pills.

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(Letter) January 17, 1919.

Feeling better, though I still cough a bit. The Madame is now devoting most of her nursing skill to Henkel. She and I get along famously. I am understanding the Normandie dialect and pronunciation much better.

Her tragedy—it is no exaggeration to say there is no French home without its own, well-guarded, sub-surface tragedy—she told me today. Her only son was a lad of 19 when Germany raised the mailed fist in "Quatorze," as they say. He was an intelligent, likely-looking lad, started in business. His picture, over the clock on the mantel of the kitchen, shows he made a brave and soldierly appearance, this youthful Corporal of Cavalry.

He marched away from Alençon August 2nd, 1914.

His mother showed me two faded letters, and, under glass, two flowers, "picked on the field of battle," as he wrote. These two letters and two flowers are all she has.

On August 26, 1914, twenty-four days after he marched off to war, he was killed.

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The tri-color about the picture and a proud sorrow in his mother's heart—that is all, now. Her eyes were dry as she talked of him, but—once—the tears were near.

Sorrow is infinite. How then could you multiply her sorrow by ten? Or a hundred; or a thousand, or ten thousand? It is inconceivable. Yet there were over ten million, one hundred thousand actually killed in the war. . . . Only the Man of Sorrows Himself has the Infinite Mind to comprehend the infinite sorrows which lodge in human hearts today over the world.

And now, some of us in America and some in England are ready to enter a race for the largest navy in the world!!!

Did I tell you one of our lads was killed en route here? He was a "C" Co. man whom I did not know well. He was sitting in the open side door of his car when the door of a passing coach, carelessly left swinging, struck his knees, knocking him out and under the wheels.

It seems such a pity he could not have been killed at the front; and a cruel irony of fate to lose his life, after the fighting was over and he was on his way home.

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(Letter) Alençon, France, Jan. 20, 1919.

Went to a Mass at 11 yesterday morning, in honor of the French and Allied Soldier Dead. There was beautiful music —a violin with organ was magnificent. The priest was a fine-looking man, in the forties, and he spoke clearly and crisply. Inasmuch as I knew his subject, I was able to understand the greater part of his eloquent tribute to the martyrs—more than of some sermons at home when I was a bit sleepy.

In the evening we went to the "Cinema Familia." Saw news-film, an episode of a serial and "Mary Pichford" in "La Bête Enchainée"—one I had seen in America long ago.

If ever, it was in Alencon we lived "the life of Riley." Each morning about 9 the Madame brought Henk and I our hot chocolate and toast, which we ate in bed. Then we hung about, reading or writing letters till 10:30 or 11, when I reported to the Company Orderly Room, for a half-hour or an hour's

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work, or possibly none at all. When we had first reached Alencon I was so sick and worn out that I could not work. There was no fire in the office and, in my condition, I refused to work in the cold. When I discovered that the world went on without me, I decided that, inasmuch as the "war was over" and there was nothing at stake, I would take things easy until I was working for myself again. Since Maj. C—— had left us, we had the entire Bn. Hq.—8 or 10 men—to do my work. As Brooks knew how hard I had worked at Camp Sheridan, in the States, and that I had not shirked since, he understood my feelings and only semi-occasionally made a pretense of "urging" that I take a greater part in the paperwork. As I knew he did not mean it, I politely ignored it. Capt. A—— seemed to feel the same way as Harry and never once suggested that I work. It irked me when Corp. Green tried, once or twice, to assume authority over me and ordered me to help him. As I pointed out to him, I outranked him, in date of warrant, and was regretfully unable to accept his commands.

After a little work in the office, I would go down to the company noon mess (if good; or, if not, eat at the Madame's table) then return to the office for another half hour or so. I would then leave for "home," reporting again to the office about 3 or 4 p. m., staying till time for 4:30 mess, after which I was long-gone.

Thus the long days passed, while we waited for the magic boats which were to take us back home.

The Y. M. C. A. brought excellent talent to the local theatre for our entertainment. The 37th Division Show, organized at Wormhoudt, was performed time after time, for the boys never seemed to tire of it. The Y. M. and J. W. B. social rooms were both popular places of rendezvous. Without these diversions to help while away the terrible monotony, I think we must have gone mad waiting for the magic boats which were to take us home.

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(Letter) Alençon, Jan. 27, 1919.

Yesterday was our Company "banquet" on the funds of the Mothers' Club of Cincinnati—about $125.00. We had mashed potatoes (issue), stewed onions (issue), pork (boughten), and cake. The pork was very good. The cake was half-cooked, hard and inedible. We ate in our regular courtyard, standing up, on the snow. Oh, yes, I also had a half-cup of half-cold coffee. A farce, you say? No; to us it was a tragedy.

I fare better when we eat at "home." We have perfected an arrangement with the Madame to eat here at a cost of two francs, which certainly cannot pay her a profit. Last evening we had bouillon, blood-sausage, an excellent oil-salad (which the Monsieur mixes, with a finished art, at the table), bread and coffee.

After we had eaten, two war-widows, who own a shop next door, invited us to come over. We all went in and were treated to "crepe." Now, crepe means the same in French as in English; but it also may be translated "pancakes." These are made as large as a plate, and as thin as paper. Taste like waffles; and with sugar, slide down with pleasant facility and in incredible quantity. Cidre was served with them.

The hostesses were intensely interested in America—its large buildings, and its reputed general happiness and universal wealth—also the red-skins. Rather doubted my word when I told them the Indians had raised no Cain for a generation and were, instead, Abel agriculturists.

Asked us if we had many Esquimaux; and how long it took to make a fortune? Showed me some excellent pictures of a brother, who is a Catholic missionary in Africa.

As I write this the seven-year-old daughter of one of the widows, visiting me, sits at my side. She has yellow hair, blue eyes, a wonderful complexion, and is "tres mignonne," as they say. Quite a friend of mine.

The other woman has a son, 27 months old, very pretty also. He was afraid of me, as his mother used to tell him "if he wasn't good the Americans would get him." How-

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ever, I won his heart with some chocolate and we shook hands and exchanged kisses. So now we are friends, I hope.

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(Letter) Alençon, 30th Jan., 1919.

Tuesday, the 28th, the twice-postponed visit of the Commander-in-Chief actually materialized. General Pershing arrived here about noon, in his private car. By 9:30 or 10:30 a. m., after hiking from three to twenty kilo's, the doughboys were awaiting him, on the Champs des Manœuvres. It is a large, flat field, with nothing to obstruct the view but a few hedges.

I watched the proceedings from the side-line, as, of course, the M. P's were not represented. With military promptness, the General arrived for the 1 o'clock Review at 1:30. He inspected the entire Division present (one platoon from each company) which took nearly two hours. Then he decorated five or six soldiers and one or two officers. The massed colors and regimental standards behind them made a brilliant line of color while their Commander-in-Chief bestowed upon them the recognition of their valor and service. After this, Pershing took up his position upon the reviewing stand. General Farnsworth, the Division Commander, with staff, rode by, hand at salute, eyes left, upon his superior. Then followed the Buckeye Division, in company front. The long line of olive-drab figures, well-arranged as to height, every face colored by the weather, with rifle and bayonet at the correct angle, swept down the snow-covered field most impressively. As the Stars and Stripes and regimental colors of each unit reached the proper distance from the stand, the band-leader would blow his whistle, the musicians would break off and render "To the Colors." The military onlookers stood at salute; the troops gave eyes left and General Pershing returned their salute.

It seemed to be the M. P's fate to be afflicted with dozens of attached Lieutenants, whose stay was more or less brief. One of them, a little fellow with "C" Company, looked for all the world like a High

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School freshman. Naturally, he took himself very seriously.

The discipline at Alencon was very lax and it was impossible to get more than a handful of men to stand Reveille. This little Louie tried in vain to force us to attend this formation. One winter morning, the company was represented by three men and himself. He was disgusted with the showing and expressed himself very freely.

"The idea!" he sputtered. "Only three men present out of two hundred!"

Pointing to a French canine sitting nearby, Don Smith said, encouragingly, "And a dog, Lieutenant; three men, a Lieutenant and a dog."

(Letter) Oh, yes, it's Alençon, Jan. 27.

I must tell you that you are mistaken when you assume that the soldiers are not really anti-prohibition. If I can judge by their expressions, at least 98% are "wet." Many have learned to drink here; and, as I have written, one cannot hate the traffic as one does in America. The cafes are open, friendly, family affairs (except the actual dives), and instead of a beery-faced, brutal bar-keep, one sees pleasant, motherly Madames or cheery, decent bar-maids. One eats meals and drinks coffee and tea there also. They are nothing like the American saloon.

Anyway, the popular thing is to curse the "slackers who voted Ohio dry, while we went over the top," as the song goes. . . . . .

Mention of songs reminds me of the following popular verse of doughboy-French, which Capt. A—— brought back from leave at Nice, where everybody was singing it. It is slightly altered to conform to American ideas:

**BON SOIR, MA CHERIE.**

Bon soir, ma cherie,
  Comment allez vous?
Bon soir, ma cherie,
  Ou allez vous?
Bon soir, ma cherie,
  Vous etes tres bien;
Voulez vous parler 'vec moi ce soir?
  Dites moi? Tres bien!

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(Diary) **PARAMÉ (St. Malo,) Ille et Vilaine,**
**(American "Brittainy Leave Area"),**
**Thurs., Feb. 6, 1919.**

Henkel and I got up at 4:15. Despite our protests, Madame also arose and made us coffee. We had the special company breakfast for men going on leave, at 4:45 a. m. and arrived at depot at 5:30. Train left at 6:17.

Changed cars at LeMans. Coffee and cakes served free by Y. M. C. A. at station.

Next train took us to Rennes, Changed again. Arrived St. Malo about 8:30. Passed thru red-tape "check-in" in an hour. RAIN . . . MUD. . . PACKS. . . So this is a furlough? . . . Walked 'bout a million kilo's to "Grand Hotel Courtoisville," Paramé. Had a 10:30 supper and to bed.

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(Diary) St. Malo, Fri., Feb. 7.

Three rings brought a pretty maid to our room. But she heartlessly informed us that we could not have breakfast served in bed. We had been told we could. A tragic disappointment.

In afternoon we went on a Y. M. trip across harbor to St. Servan, where we saw the Tour Solidor, a high, double-tower, which we learned had been built by Duke John IV of Brittany, in 1382, while that worthy was besieging St. Malo. Saw the cell wherein, the fortunes of war having changed, he was later imprisoned. Better than most of my billets.

Saw an ancient well which tradition avers was sunk by Saracens who fled here after the battle of Tours. Also walls of a Roman fort.

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(Letter) St. Malo, Feb. 8, 1919.

What a glorious day this is! When we awoke we found it the coldest day we had experienced in France; even the ground was frozen hard. But overhead the sun shines warmly and the sky is pure of clouds. The sea is smooth, with a lazy surf breaking on the smooth sand beach. Even the dull gray forts offshore seem brightened by this sunshine, the second bright day in three months, I am told. Hundreds

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of white sea-gulls float on the water, or skim over its surface on graceful wing. It is a perfect August day in every detail but the temperature.

---

(Letter) St. Malo, Feb. 9, 1919.

The Y. M. C. A. gave a dance last night in the Casino. The Y. M. girls and French girls of good family, accompanied by their Mamans, danced with the boys. Made me too homesick to dance. Movies and stunts entertain us every afternoon and evening, in the pretty theater here.

Met Harvey Lambkin, my old Toledo friend, at the Casino. He's in the Aviation Service.

This afternoon, three of us took a boat across the bay (the mouth of the River Rance) to Dinard, which is more fashionable than St. Malo or Paramé. The Casino there, built of stone, is much finer. A large American and British colony resided there in ante-bellum days.

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(Diary) St. Malo, February 11.

Took train to Mont. St. Michel, "the Jewel of Brittainy." This was formerly a tiny island a mile from land, but silt has built up a causeway to it, on which the railroad runs. The village has only one street, which winds toward the top of the mountain. Above the town is perched a wonderful and enormous Abbaye, parts of it dating from the eighth century. Very, very interesting.

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(Letter) Alençon, Orne, Feb. 14, 1919.

I note that a congressman named Dent, from Montgomery, Ala., has introduced into the House a bill forbidding service-stripes.

The dirty, low-down dog! That is the most contemptible trick I ever heard of a lick-spittle politician playing. It is a gross insult to every one of the boys who offered their lives in France. (Even the S. O. S. had to take a chance on submarines.)

Why is it done? Because the yellow-backed slackers

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who didn't have the guts to come across, and are jealous, HAVE MORE VOTES THAN WE. That's all.

But I want to tell you that the A. E. F. is going to have something to say when it comes back. These white-livered, pussy-footing demagogues will get kicked into a realization of their own utter non-essentiality in the scheme of life.

---

(Letter) Alençon, Feb. 15, 1919.

Had a bunch of Marine "casuals" eat at our mess this noon. They did not look "Super-Soldiers" to me, although that is heresy to their press-agents.

They were just nice, pleasant, quiet, little fellows, with uniforms just like ours—just as sloppy and ill-fitting, too—except an over-large U.S.M.C. insignia on their caps. I'll back the Buckeye Division against them in soldierly appearance, drill or fight.

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(Letter) Ballon, Sarthe, Feb. 19, 1919.

Monday, the 17th, the Company marched from Alençon. Brooks had directed me (at my earnest suggestion) to remain there and take the company records on a truck the next morning.

Monday afternoon I found out that, instead of sending back a truck for the office stuff, at the last minute they had piled it on a wagon and taken it along. As a matter of fact, I knew this Sunday, but not officially.

Tuesday I arose at 5:15, ate the egg and toast, and drank the chocolate and coffee which the dear old Madame had prepared for me, and started off.

The Corps M. P. (our natural enemy) at the Gare was asleep and I passed thru with ease. I had no authority to take the train; nor much money, either. But lots of nerve. Left at 6:30 and arrived at Montbizot at 7:45. Started to hike to Ballon, when I heard my name called, turned and saw Henkel and Galigher. They had left with the company Monday; had hiked 20 kilo's to Thoire; then decided they could sleep better in Alençon, so took a train back there! As it was late, they had stayed at the hotel.

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It was only five kilometres to Ballon, and a beautiful walk. A river, no doubt the Sarthe, swollen, but not discolored, with spring rains, fills the valley. The Normandy landscape, with its lopped-off willows and slim, soldierly poplars, is distinctive.

Ballon rests on the crest of a hill; a dead town of only a few hundred inhabitants.

Located a good billet, a room with a fireplace. Henk rustled a bunk, knocked it down and made a two-passenger bed for us.

We arrived there three or four hours ahead of the outfit and welcomed them to Ballon. Guess this irritated Lt. H—— (in command since Capt. A—— went to Nice for a two-weeks leave), for soon Henkel, Galigher and myself, as well as the two Bracken brothers (Corp. Vincent and Pvt. Raymond) who had come by camion, were all summoned to appear before the Lieutenant. H—— heard our several stories (Oh, how those other fellows lied!) and promptly assessed upon each of us one week's confinement to quarters. Now, this was my first punishment in the Army, and although my conscience was not perfectly clear, I had a darn good excuse. So I insisted on my story. Brooks came in and corroborated my statements. Lt. H—— apologized and lifted my sentence. The punishment was nothing, but I didn't want that fellow to put anything over on me.

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(Diary) Ballon, Thurs., Feb. 20th.

Working regularly. Lots of red tape preparatory to embarking.

In afternoon went thru a gaunt, gray Norman castle—"Chateau"—which sits on the summit of a steep little hill with the two roads into the village proper winding on either side. Our little faubourg is at the base of this hill. The castle was built in 824 A. D.

Cards every evening, with Henkel, "Red" Wiethorn, Osborne, Wayne Hyde, Galigher, Allison and others, seated on our improvised bed, with candles on the bed-posts.

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(Diary) Ballon, Feb. 21, 1919.

Springtime is coming to France. The rivers are flooded. Buds are swelling. In the morning, as we wash in the ditch flowing past our billet, the songs of birds greet the day.

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(Letter) Alençon, Orne, Feb. 24 (Monday).

Capt. A. rejoined us Saturday, and, as the company owed two bills back here, for broken furniture and stolen firewood, he sent me back to pay them. Hiked back to Montbizot, eluded two Corps M. P's there and boarded train. I had only Captain A——'s pass—no Division authority, or travel orders.

Neither party I wished to see was at home yesterday. Found them this morning and settled their claims.

The Madame was delighted to see me again. Celebrated by another chicken dinner yesterday. Had we stayed longer here, her flock would have been only a memory. Believe she now has two hens left.

---

(Letter) Ballon, Sarthe, Feb. 25, 1919.

Inspected by the Area Inspector this afternoon. Company formed in a pasture. Laid shelter-halves in five inches of mud and water and displayed property thereon, to make sure we were properly equipped for a campaign in the States.

It was at Ballon that some miscreant stole our coffee and sugar. In desperation "Lard" Planitz put the coffee-sack to boil, in an effort to extract every bit of coffee flavor that remained. Bits of rope-like flotsam aroused our suspicions, and Tom Adams discovered the bag. For weeks thereafter "Lard's" appearance would produce cries of "Who made coffee out of barracks-bags?"

Major C——, who left us some weeks back, is now a Lieutenant Colonel, and Capt. I——, who was torn from us about two weeks since, is a Major. These hard-earned preferments for our idolized officers help assuage the bitter grief with which we are overwhelmed at having lost them.

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The valorous deeds of the "Fighting 37th" were not overlooked in France, and their feats were officially recorded.

Following is an incomplete list of citations and praises bestowed upon the "Buckeye Division" by American and French high commands:

6th Army Corps,
General Staff,
1st Section,

No. 823/1 14 September, 1918.

**SPECIAL ORDER No. 66.**

The 37th U. S. Infantry Division is leaving the zone of Luneville at a time when the American Army has achieved great victory and has added new laurels to those already gathered by the first American Division on the Somme, on the Marne and on the Vesle.

I am pleased at having had the honor of commanding for several weeks the young troops of Ohio. having seen them each day become more soldierly and conscious of their power. I know now that they will come up to standard in the hardest and noblest tasks which they will be called upon to perform when they are engaged upon a new battle front.

The method, the spirit, the discipline which they have shown all the time, when hardly landed on the shores of France, they were called upon to hold a sector, are the best guarantees of future success.

My best wishes accompany the Buckeye Division in its future battles, in which it will distinguish itself to the honor of its flag and to the triumph of our righteous cause.

DUPORT.

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(Extract)

**G. H. Q.**

**American Expeditionary Forces.**

General Orders
No. 232. France, Dec. 19, 1918.

It is with a sense of gratitude for its splendid accomplishment which will live through all history, that I record in General Orders a tribute to the victory of the First Army in the Meuse-Argonne battle.

* * *

For more than six weeks you battered against the pivot of the enemy line on the western front. It was a position of imposing natural strength, stretching on both sides of the Meuse River from the bitterly contested hill of Verdun to the almost impenetrable forest of the Argonne, a

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position, moreover, fortified by four years of labor designed to render it impregnable, a position held with the fullest resources of the enemy. That position you broke utterly and thereby hastened the collapse of the enemy's military power.

Soldiers of all divisions engaged—the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 26th, 28th, 32nd, 33rd, 35th, 37th, 42nd, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 82nd, 89th, 90th and 91st—you will long be remembered for the stubborn persistence of your progress, your storming of obstinately defended machine-gun nests, your penetration, yard by yard, of woods and ravines, your heroic resistance in the face of counter-attacks supported by powerful artillery fire.

Your achievement, which is scarcely to be equalled in American history, must remain a source of proud satisfaction to the troops who participated.

JOHN J. PERSHING,
General, Commander in Chief,
American Expeditionary Forces.

OFFICIAL:
Robert C. Davis,
Adjutant General.

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VI French Army. 11 December, 1918.

## General Order No. 31.

In addressing myself to the Divisions of the United States of America who had covered themselves with glory in the Chateau-Thiery offensive, I said that orders given by the Chief were always carried out, in spite of the difficulties and the sacrifices necessary to win.

In the 37th and 91st Divisions, U. S., I found the same spirit of duty and the willing submission to discipline which makes gallant soldiers and victorious armies.

The enemy was to hold the heights between the LYS and the ESCAUT "to the death." American troops of these Divisions, acting in concert with the French Divisions of the Group of Armies of FLANDERS broke through the enemy on the 31st of October, 1918, and after severe fighting, threw him across the Escaut.

Then attempting an operation of war of unheard-of audacity, the American units crossed the overflooded ESCAUT under fire of the enemy and maintained themselves on the oposite bank of the river in spite of his counter attacks.

Glory to such troops and their chiefs. They have valiantly contributed to the liberation of a part of Belgian territory and to final victory.

Their great nation may be proud of them.

The General Commanding the Army.
DEGOUTTE.

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Headquarters 37th Division.
Adj. No. 405. A.P.O. 763, American E. F.,
26 February, 1919.

General Orders No. 2.

1. The following letter from General JOHN J. PERSHING, Commander-in-Chief of the American E. F., dated Feb-

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ruary 19, 1919, to the Commanding General, 37th Division, is published for the information of this command:

"It gives me a great deal of pleasure to extend to you and the officers and men of the 37th Division my compliments upon their excellent appearance at the review and inspection on the 28th of January near Alencon. It was gratifying to see your troops in such good physical shape, but still more so to know that the moral tone of all ranks is so high.

"Arriving in France on June 23rd, the Division's period of training behind the line was cut short and one month later it was put in the line in the Baccarat sector, thereby relieving veteran divisions for the battle. On September 26th, the Division attacked in the great Meuse-Argonne offensive. In six days it advanced 9 kilometres when it was withdrawn to reconstitute and almost immediately sent to reinforce the French Army in Flanders. From the end of October until the armistice, the Division took part in the Ypres-Lys offensive, during which time it captured the towns of Huttemgen and Winkelken, making in two days an advance of 14 kilometers to the Scheldt River and capturing the town of Ryne, in spite of heavy enemy resistance. By aggressive and persistent efforts, and against strong enemy artillery and machine gun fire, bridges were built and a crossing effected, making it possible to pursue the enemy on the east side of the river.

"Please extend my congratulations to the officers and men of your splendid division who may proudly carry home with them the gratitude of the Allies with whom they fought and the pride of their fellows throughout our forces."

By command of Major General FARNSWORTH.

Official:

G. D. Light,
Lt. Colonel, Inf.,
Division Adjutant.

Sumner Waite,
Major, General Staff,
Acting Chief-of-Staff.

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## FIRST SERGEANT BROOKS REDUCED AND COURT-MARTIALED

FOR reasons well understood, neither my diary nor letters could safely tell the true story of the infamous reduction and trial of First Sergeant Harry Brooks.

The trouble started at Alencon, when a prisoner, who had been a trusty for weeks, helping about the kitchen, skipped out one night and got all cognaced-up, stealing a pistol from one of the Corps M. P's. After this episode he returned to his billet and went to bed.

Capt. A—— had had a dispute with the Major in command of these S. O. S. M. P's, when the latter had tried to assume command of our company while in the Alencon area. Several of our boys had had minor arguments with them, too, and so they seized on this opportunity to embarass us by reporting it to Division Headquarters.

In truth, the trouble started further back, for ever since Brooks had been Top Sergeant, some 13 or 14 months, he had been so efficient that A—— had unloaded on him a great deal of the responsibility which should have been assumed by an officer. It was a common remark for Harry or I to make that "there never is an officer around" and he had to take the initiative in many things. A—— knew that there was no regular guard upon these prisoners, who were really permanent K. P's. Every man in the company knew they were loosely guarded, for none wanted to escape. Certainly it was the Captain's duty to know how they were guarded. He never appointed an Officer of the Guard, as he should, for ours was an independent unit. One of the many useless lieutenants should have been made

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Officer of the Guard and have superintended the guard. Brooks was not responsible either morally or by military law.

But the report went to Division and right away they wanted to know why and who was responsible. It looked as if either A——'s commission or Brooks' stripes would be lost. Guess what happened.

Without a hint of warning, Corp. Myers was ordered, on February 28th, to take Brooks in custody and an order was issued reducing the Top to Private and appointing Sgt. Arkwright in his place.

The Company was in an uproar. I never saw men closer to mutiny. A spark would have caused trouble, for Brooks was beloved, and a blind man could see the injustice of it all. One fellow, in anger, scrawled obscene words on the face of the Order, which foolish action caused Capt. A—— to issue an edict confining the entire Company to their quarters until the culprit confessed. As a side-light on the situation, let me state that no one ever confessed, or told; nor did the men heed the confining order.

Brooks was "imprisoned" in a cottage half-way up the hill to Ballon proper. Never did royalty fare better under duress. Every guard was his personal friend. Scarce a man in the Company but who stopped to have a chat and give the little Sergeant a handful of cigars or a tin-box of chocolate from the Canteen. I know I stopped to make a humble gift, which Harry refused, loading me, instead, with an overplus of his gifts. Surely, A—— knew of the looseness with which he was guarded, but I am of the opinion he dared not interfere. Imprisoning him at all, no matter what the merit of the charge, was simply an uncalled for indignity.

This case will show the iniquity of the Army court-martial system. In the first place Capt. A—— was the real responsible party; the man really guilty

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of negligence and laxity. In the second place, he was the Officer preferring the charges—making the accusation. In the third place, as commander of the Company, he reduced Brooks by Company Order before trial. In the fourth place, Capt. A——, as Commanding Officer of an independent unit, appointed the C. M. Officer, 1st Lt. Ancile R. Thomas, who was an officer attached to the company and directly under A——'s orders. In the fifth place, Capt. A—— was chief witness against the accused. And, lastly, as unit commander, it was his duty to **approve or disapprove of the finding and increase or decrease the penalty.** He was **culprit, complainant, jailer, judge-selector, star witness** and **reviewing authority.**

The trial dragged out till we were nearly ready to embark. If not for that, Brooks told me he would have demanded a General Court-Martial, which was his legal right and in which he **might** have had more of a fair chance. But the war was over and he knew if he did that it would be contrived to have him left in France when we sailed. So he decided to take his punishment and forget it.

After all the testimony had been heard, the S. C. M. Officer, Lt. Thomas, who was a well-meaning sort of a fellow, told me privately that he could find no evidence to show Brooks was guilty; that in his heart and soul he believed him innocent.

**The next day he found him "Guilty."**

I afterwards learned that he told A——, unofficially, that he was going to find Brooks "Not Guilty;" and the latter exploded and said, "By G—, then, I'll try every man in the Company till you find some one guilty."

Clyde Cotterman, Corporal of the Guard, was also court-martialled, found guilty and sentenced. We felt this was equally an injustice.

Don't blame Capt. A——; he was acting in self-defense. If he took advantage of the court-martial system to protect himself, it was no more than many others would have done. It is the mockery of military "justice" which we hate so bitterly.

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## BREST

(Letter) Camp Pontanazen, BREST,
7 March, 1919.

TUESDAY, the 4th, was the long-awaited day when we started for Brest. Up at 5:30. Ate sow-belly, semi-cooked rice and watery, unsweetened cocoa in the dark and rain. Of course, it was 8:45 before we started. Hiked 11 kilo's to Beaumont, in about 2½ hours. Entered the town over a plain, massive stone bridge said to have been constructed by the Romans.

Y. M. C. A. girls gave us hot chocolate, crackers and cigarets at the station, as we had no dinner. Pulled out at 1:42 in American freight cars, hauled by an U. S. A. engine and manned by A. E. F. men. Fifty-eight men in our car. Cramped. Rode all afternoon and night. . . Slept perhaps one hour.

It was 1 p. m. Wednesday when we detrained at Brest. Yes; it rained.

Something was wrong with the system and we marched in circles for a while. Finally entered a mess-hall and ate, standing.

Then followed a heart-breaking up-hill hike, under heavy pack. It was only about 5 kilo's, but, oh, boy! . . . . We passed thru the edge of the city and out to Camp Pontanazen. Billeted in tents. There are stoves in them, but no stove-pipes nor fuel. It is absolutely necessary to keep to the duck-boards to avoid a muddy grave.

The mess-system here is really good. The stuff is well-cooked, not too much, but we have the glorious privilege of returning for seconds. Verily, **la guerre est finie!**

Deloused this morning. Then we left the tent area and moved farther down into barracks. Earth floor and wire bunks. Not bad.

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Brest was at its worst a month or two before we arrived there. Then the tents had no floors, and thousands of men had not even tents.

In March, physical conditions, tho far from ideal, were improving. But the military atmosphere was disgraceful. In the first place, the officers in authority were trying desperately to do what should have been done months ago—render the camp fit for the large number of troops which was passing thru. Not having had foresight enough to do this before, they were levying on the returning troops for the man-power to build the camp and put it in shape to undergo investigation. Our boys were compelled to labor 12 hours one day and 12 hours the next night digging ditches, carrying ties, packing supplies about, building, painting, etc. This was strictly contrary to specific G. H. Q. A. E. F. Orders forbidding officers to put M. P 's on any work detail, but A—— was afraid to stand up for his men.

The only permanent labor details they could hope to secure were from men violating military regulations. So they carried this to terribly unjust extremes. "Hard-boiled" S. O. S. officers were on duty wandering about the camp streets, afoot or on horse-back, whose only duty was to catch enlisted men in some slight deviation from strict behaviour. Failure to salute a passing officer, usually ignored, or punished by a reprimand, was sufficient cause. Boisterous conduct on the streets was dangerous. Wandering a block off the narrow limits of one's area was defying their wrath. When a man was caught in some such slight dereliction, his name and organization was noted, and he was placed with a bunch of other hapless soldiers. When a sufficient number had been accumulated, they were sent to the camp of the permanent camp labor battalions. Orderlies were sent to their organizations, with orders to their commanding officers to turn over their Service Records and drop them from the rolls. Many

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men were thus punished for complaining of the camp, or the autocratic regime there, or loitering, or scuffling in mess-line, or talking rudely to those super-soldiers, the Marines, whose sole part in the great war had been to police mess-lines in Brest.[1] Troops on leaving were forbidden to sing, despite previous orders encouraging and fostering march-singing. Troops who showed their delight at leaving this hell-hole and heading for the good old U. S. A. were recalled and sentenced to remain there at hard labor.

Our boys had prided themselves on being hard-boiled, but the proximity of our sailing date and this Czaristic censoring of a man's very thoughts, completely took the starch out of them and they were models of propriety and gentleness. They would have suffered any indignity, if thereby they hastened their departure for the Promised Land.

(Diary) Camp Pontanazen, March 9.

Pack inspection by C. C. My pack was O. K'd six times, with six various "owners."

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(Dairy) March 11.

Pack and equipment inspection by Camp Inspector. In my excitement I lost my tooth-paste, but finally convinced the Inspector I had some.

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(Diary) Camp Pontanazen, Brest, France, March 14, 1919.

Received sailing orders.

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1This is said with no intention of reflecting on the relatively small proportion of the U. S. Marine Corps who did see actual fighting. As is well known, they covered themselves with glory.

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# HOMEWARD BOUND

(Letter) Aboard U. S. S. "MONTANA,"
18 March, 1919.

HERE I am, sprawled out on the wet deck of this old cruiser, in the shadow of the gun-turret, on the quarter-deck, while we dip and slip thru the Atlantic. It looks uncommonly gay today, with a bright sun glinting on its blue waves and white foam. Gay? Why not? We're coming Home! WE'RE coming HOME!!

We are wearing blue fatigue suits over our O. D's, and a rough-looking crew we appear. Here it is nearing noon on Tuesday and I haven't shaved since Saturday morning. Ship's barber-shop is always crowded and fresh water in the washrooms is a rarity.

We rolled out early Saturday, the 15th—five o'clock of a rainy morning. A last clean-up, then made up the old pack for nearly the last time. An unexpected order was received for a Final Equipment Inspection. As we neared the place, at 9:45, we saw clouds of steam pouring out from the Delouser—the big, sprawly cootie-plant. Then out rushed soldiers—soldiers half-dressed, soldiers in underwear, soldiers in blankets and soldiers in nothing at all but a Great Hurry. The building in which we were to have been inspected adjoined the Delouser and we could not enter.

Soon the steam changed into clouds of smoke and we saw a grand spectacle had been arranged for our farewell to France. The smoke-screen rolled and billowed, shot with faint pink gleams, then with vivid scarlet flames.

I had read in the camp paper of the wonderfully-organized camp fire-department. More than a quarter hour after the fire started, IT came, hitched to a truck. The Camp M. P's, so "hard" in mess-lines, were demoralized by this incident, and if Corp. Foppe had not butted in and taken charge of the traffic, IT would have been stalled in the congestion on the roads.

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At 12:30 we fell in for the last time and marched down to the city. Heeding the fate of predecessors, we marched along without a word or a smile—without even a happy look—for we had no wish to be recalled for the Labor Battalion. (First time I ever saw "A" Company march at Attention!) A short, swift, hot hike to Brest, a city swarming with American fighters, Marines and S. O. S. troops; American sailors; French soldiers and sailors; Chinese and Japanese sailors, and whom else I know not. We laid an hour or two on the American wharves, while smiling Red Cross girls gave each of us a pair of sox, holding cigarets, chocolate, jam, gum and other treasures.

Finally came the long-dreamed-of command; we fell in, filed past the checker and onto a lighter, which bore us out to the ship, which we boarded at 4:30. It was "Chow" which we ate at 5:30—not Mess—and it was excellent.

At 6 o'clock we got under way for America.

The hills of Brest and the harbor full of ships faded away into the twilight. Two or three lighthouses winked a jolly, sympathetic Au Revoir to France; then night shut them from us and we were surrounded by the solitude of the Atlantic. A moon rose on our port side and a ray of silver light streamed across the waters.

I automatically "relinquished" all work upon boarding the ship. A——, of course, is too sea-sick to say anything. My dear old friend Lt. H—— looked me up and tried to hand me a job as valet to a K. C. secretary; peeling lemons, picking up papers from the floor, etc. The air in the tiny office, deep in the bowels of the ship, was too much for me, and I gave up a real chicken-supper. After that I gradually and artistically faded from that job. Told H—— it was not to my liking at all. He told me to tell my good friend George Morrison, late of Headquarters Company, to take my place. Pvt. George responded humbly that he'd report when he got over being sea-sick, and not before. I let it go at that, as that suited me; and I guess the old "Casey" is still looking for an assistant.

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(Diary) Sun., March 16.

270 miles from Brest at noon. Not enough.

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(Diary) Mon., March 17.

Good weather. Made 358 miles. 628 from Brest. Not enough.

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(Diary) Tues., March 18, 1919.

367 miles today. Too slow.

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(Dairy) Wed., March 19, 1919.

1,346 miles from Brest, having made 351 today. Not enough.

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(Diary) Thurs., March 20.

Fog. Intermittent rain.

Over half way—1,706 miles from Brest; only 1,453 miles from New York.

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(Diary) Fri., March 21.

Brighter; rough toward night. Made 376 miles—our best day.

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(Diary) Sat., March 22.

Very rough. High wind. No storm. Repeated 376-mile stunt. Sent radio home.

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(Diary) Sun., March 23.

Made 373 miles. At noon was only 328 miles from New York.

(Last entry in Diary.)

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(Letter) Cruiser "Montana," March 22.

Nearing home! I'll never forget this return trip. We dreaded it, for we believed this season would be stormy. But it has been delightful. We have laid about the decks, reading books, stealing books, buying books and trading books; smoking, rehashing our experiences, and planning the future.

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Each evening there are out-door movies and a concert by the ship's band.

Last night I spent three hours on the stern, watching the swirling waters, with the phosphorescent spots gleaming among them, like the souls of lost sailor-men. Overhead, the sky was brilliant with other worlds. A tiny lantern's light tipped the mast, bobbing and dipping, back and forth, from side to side. Black smoke streamed from the cruiser's four stacks, as she strained her mighty heart to hasten our home-coming.

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(Letter) Camp Mills, L. I., N. Y.,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
25 March, 1919.

On the old soil again!

As to the rest of our trip, Saturday we had the nearest to "foul weather" of the journey. The wind blew spitefully, carrying off metal mess-kits into the sea—in fact, in sober fact, it blew the butter off my bread. The "Montana" rolled and bucked in true western style, as her name betokened. When a wave did not mount high enough to slop over the deck, the wind would slice it off and lay it before us. However, even with the fog and rain and severe cold, it was not a real storm.

Matters improved Sunday. The sun shone intermittently.

I was awakened at 4 a. m. Monday by the feverish preparations of the boys. Made my roll and went on deck. A light could be seen far away on our starboard; a light-ship. It was 9 a. m. before we passed Ambrose Light-Ship. Nearby was anchored the "Carolina," sister ship to the "Montana," which had sailed from Brest three days before us and had just barely beaten us there. We passed her while she waited for a pilot. Our ship's Captain had wirelessed for one; and soon a tug came out. We came to a stop, a boat rowed to us, and the pilot was pulled up over the side. On we steamed, with the Jersey hills looming mistily on our left, and Long Island, with its signs of teeming American life on our right;

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into the greatest harbor of the world. Finally came the sublime moment when, rounding a point, the Statue of Liberty held up her torch. A few cheers, not many; a few tears in the eyes.

We drew up in the midst of that mighty marine marketplace, where I counted forty ships at anchor, not to compute those at dock. Then ensued a long wait, while the quarantine ship came and went, and other formalities were complied with. It was about 1:30 when we debarked in Hoboken. A campaign-hatted band and a few discreetly-aged Red Cross ladies gave us a greeting. They with the Y. M. C. A., K. C.. J. W. B., S. A., etc., gave us chocolate, gum, candies, handkerchiefs, buns and coffee. A wait for 2½ hours (soldiers are used to waiting) and at 4 we moved to the next pier and boarded the L. I. ferry. Another 2½ hours' wait, while we watched the busy North River, filled with ferries of all the railroads of America, it seemed. Each bore a cheering, waving load of male and female civilians. The bright, welcoming sun slid down in the west, striking magic fire from the crystals of the lofty buildings of Manhattan. Night stepped in on quiet feet, and, one by one, the lights of New York Town flashed forth.

At length we puffed down the North River, around the Battery, under the bridges and landed on Long Island. A few yards' walk took us to such a train as we had dreamed of for nine months. Red Cross coffee and cake before we left.

It was 10 when we detrained and then nearly an hour's hike to these barracks, which are much too fine for an A. E. F. soldier. We are confined until we become deloused. . . . . (LATER)—Deloused this afternoon. As the boys say, "We may not be pure, but Lawd knows we's sanitary." Our last ordeal by steam and kerosene.

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Instead of leaving Mills in 24 to 72 hours, we were delayed there until April 2nd, when we boarded a train for Ohio. It took nearly 48 hours to reach Cincinnati, where we pulled in early on April 4th. My wife and sister met me there.

We paraded thru the streets, with bands blaring stirring marches, a mass of people on both sides of the street cheering us at every step, "bombs bursting in air" over us, children singing; and, in general, a real old-fashioned, American Fourth of-July welcome. We were free in the afternoon and at night the Company went back to Chillicothe for demobilization.

Barracks life for a week. Not even a pretense of drill. Lots of paper-work for us, of course, but it was in a good cause, and we were glad to do it.

After a week of this, the glorious 12th of April dawned. Captain A——fell in "A" Company, 112th Military Police, later known as the 37th Military Police Company, for the last time; turned it over to 1st Sgt. Arkwright—and disappeared.

We marched to the Quartermaster's, received our Honorable Discharge, final payment and, with the shackles broken and the bonds burst asunder, walked forth, free men again.

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